2 NOVEMBER 2013

NME

Arctic Monkeys
Bradley Wiggins
Warpaint
Tame Impala

Arcade Fire Look into our eyes

"We're a weird band in a mainstream context"

Inside Arcade Fire's hypnotic new album

"Like a circle in a spiral, like a wheel within a wheel" NOEL HARRISON

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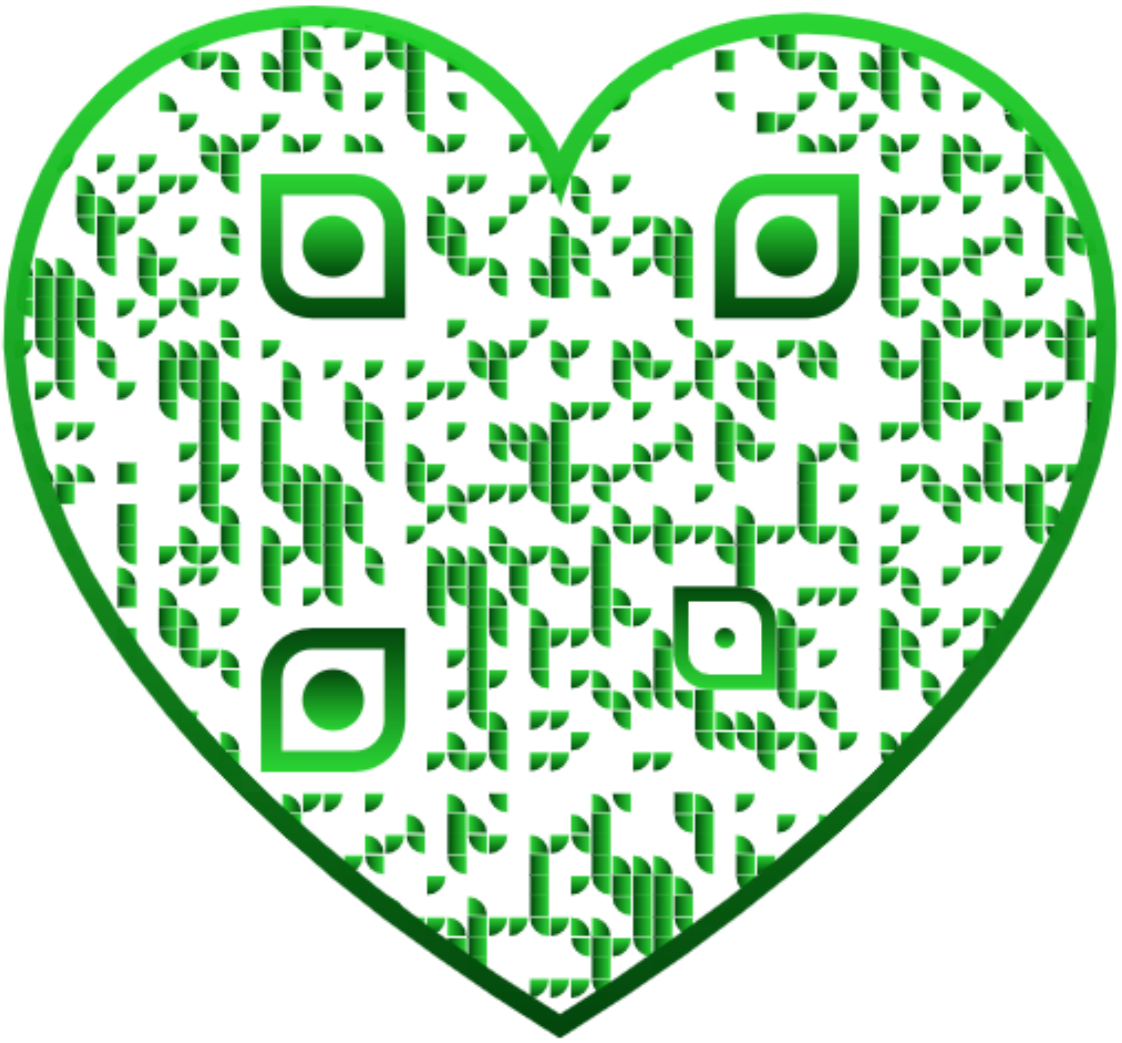

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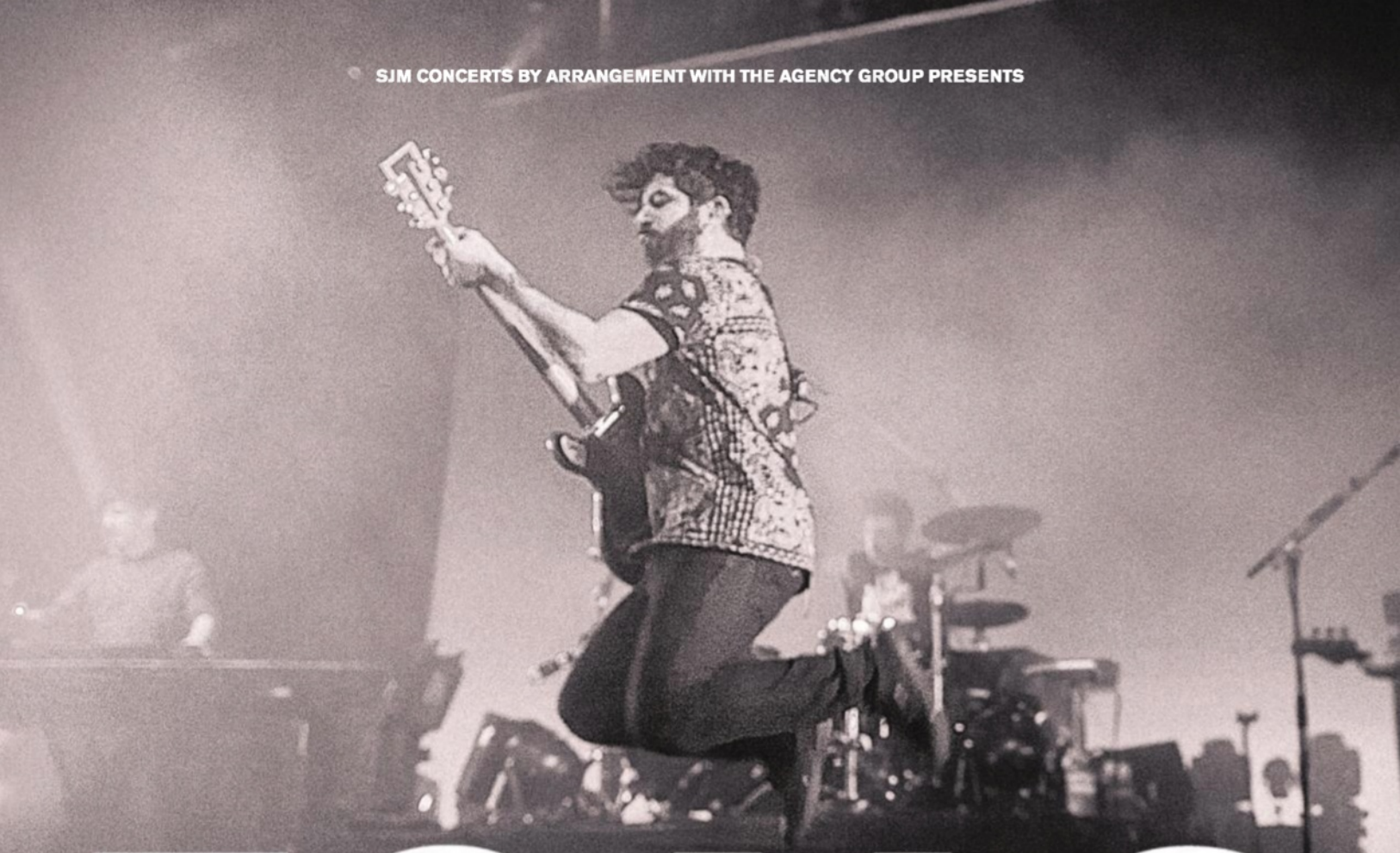

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Gary paid a visit to the *Fresh Meat* set as they filmed series three. "The image of Jack Whitehall in hotpants and vest is now burned on my retina like a freaky screensaver."

Gavin Haynes
Writer
Gavin reviewed MIA's new album. "With a pop target as multidimensionally batshit fascinating as MIA, I wrote the first 1,200 words quite quickly, then realised I only actually needed 560."

Chris Simpsons Artist
Illustrator
Chris' version of the *NME* cover is on page 47. "I couldn't stop crying when I was having a draw of Michael Jackson's portrait because I miss him so very much."

COVER: JF LALONDE

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SOUNDING OFF

TELL US WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND

Answering you this week: Mark Beaumont

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

WINS MONSTER HEADPHONES!
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WAKE UP, BRITANNIA

I could have cried when reading the 'Politics And Anger' section of the Young Britannia issue. The 'all politicians are the same I hate politicians they are rubbish I am so disillusioned' bullshit that so many bands spout is clearly to cover up for the fact that they have no opinions but want to look cool. If they really think Labour and the Tories have the same policy on, say, energy prices or Syria (or literally anything else – THEY ARE DIFFERENT PARTIES, THAT IS HOW POLITICS WORKS, YOU FUCKWITS) then they are really very, very dim. It's exactly this kind of malaise that leads to politicians being able to get away with murder – because no-one cares enough to make a fuss. All anyone's learning from this lot is the joy of fucking 'escapism'. Escapism is for lazy cunts.
Amy Gwinnett, via email

Mark Beaumont: Seconded. Right now the Tory (let's not get drawn into this whole 'coalition' facade) government is punishing young people more than at any time since the nadir of Thatcherism. The price of a university education has been set at a level that only the rich can afford. If you're unlucky enough to emerge from college without an instant job, you'll ultimately be expected to do manual labour for your unemployment benefit at significantly less than minimum wage – which, the last time we looked, was called enforced slavery. Cameron shrugs, pretending to be helpless, at vampiric fuel, rent and travel price rises while socially cleansing our cities with bedroom taxes and housing benefit caps. But if you ask most musicians about the political pressures on today's youth, they'll look around, terrified, for their press-training officer and blurt, "I don't know enough to comment." FUCK YOU.

FIGHT THE (PLAYLIST) POWER

Reading last week's Young Britannia feature, I keep getting the feeling rock/alternative/indie is being forced underground and that these new and upcoming bands (excluding a few) have a glass-half-empty attitude, like everything that makes it into the mainstream is a terrible thing. I couldn't disagree more. Bands like Kasabian, Arctic Monkeys, Miles Kane and Jake Bugg shouldn't be ignored, and bands should aim for critical AND commercial success.
Lewis McNulty, via email

Noel Gallagher is right to criticise Radio 1's music policy. I know the station needs to move with the times, but in an attempt to do so it's become obsessed with style over substance. It seems to give preference to its presenters and the idea that there should be more talk between songs than actual songs. It also appears to be desperate in grabbing onto the fashionable coat-tails of what it fancies. One minute it's Chris 'The Lad' Moyles, the next it's the painfully hip Nick Grimshaw (pictured below). Radio 1 used to champion music that was new and good, producing DJs who seemed to be doing it because they loved it and not so they would get a panel show on BBC Three.
Alex Renton, via email

MB: As on most matters not relating to Jay Z, Noel has a good point. Radio 1's trend-chasing playlist guardians have decided that rock is dead and it's all Robin 'As Two Short Planks' Thicke and Hannah Montana's naked evil twin round their gaff these days. Fine. If that's the mainstream they're ordering their smug clothes-horse DJs to enforce, they're welcome to it. Rock'n'roll has always thrived in the underground, gathering grotty forces of Fat White Families and Jagwar Mas to make bloody charges on the gates of Fortress Grimshaw. Those hardy alternative acts that do manage to break in are flavouring the mainstream for the better and thus should be celebrated.

HOOKED ON CRACK(LE)

I'm 17 and I have just started collecting vinyl. I love the artwork and all the lyrics in a little book. But it does annoy me that often there are iTunes bonus tracks. I think people should be rewarded for buying a physical copy.
Faron, via email

Last week I sat down with a glass of wine to listen to Goldfrapp's new album. Like most of my friends, I have been taken in by the snappy and portable benefits of iTunes. However, I couldn't play it on my iPod dock because the connector is now outdated. And I couldn't play it through the 'aux in' as my wire has a fault in it. I'm starting to feel a bit bogged down with technology and am proud to say I will be getting a record player this Christmas.
Gadge Roberts, via email

MB: Finally, Generation Download divides. On one side, music consumers, twerking themselves blind to whatever YouTube recommends next. And on the other, music *fans* like Faron and Gadge here, who crave the connection to music you can only get from holding it in your hands, scouring its booklets and skinning up on its profound photography. Time has come for me to cash in on my set of 12 seven-inch Wedding Present 'Hit Parade' singles. Who'll start the bidding at £12,000?

MOZIOGRAPHY

I think it's what everyone who's even vaguely interested in Morrissey expected: droll, witty and sarcastic. In the first paragraph of *Autobiography* he talks of his sister trying to kill him, remarking, "whether this be rivalry or visionary no-one knows". My love for Moz probably ran out about three years ago, so maybe visionary? He's still entertaining, even if it's not in the way he intended.
Ollie Burchell, via email

MB: Ah, dearest Ollie, the pages and pages and pages of Mozzer's book stretch before you like so many foiled "humasexual" trysts. May it re-spark your love for the Eternal Unloveable.

LOOK WHO'S STALKING

My friends Esme, Ellie and I met Higgy from Swim Deep outside their gig at Shepherds Bush Empire. It was an amazing show. He said it was nice to meet us and thanked us for coming.
Georgia Plomer, London

DEAN CHALKLEY, GETTY

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ON REPEAT

NME TRACK OF THE WEEK

1. Loom
Lice

As confrontational as Danny Dyer on a Friday night Wetherspoons bender, 'Lice' is a short-tempered two-minute barrage of rage and riffs. "*He's got a pet that lives in his head*", howls frontman Tarik Badwan in this grunge-adelic ode to headlice. If Kurt Cobain had sung about the scalp-based problems that affect primary school kids instead of nonsense about boxes shaped like hearts, it would have sounded like this.
Leonie Cooper, writer

2. Warpaint
Love Is To Die

Haim may have pipped them to the title of LA's most successful new band, but Warpaint's return is little short of masterful. Helmed by A-list producer Flood (whose previous clients range from U2 to Smashing Pumpkins), 'Love Is To Die' amps up the four-piece's devotion to all things Cocteau Twins. But it's the pummelling bass – all Jah Wobble at his dubby best – and Stella Mozgawa's powerhouse drumming that push it to another level.
Matt Wilkinson, New Music Editor

3. Kurt Vile
Feel My Pain

If you wanted to be mean, you could say that Kurt Vile only has one idea. If you're a fan, you'd counter that it's a very good one. On 'Feel My Pain' the 33-year-old Philadelphia troubadour further refines the hybrid of Neil Young and Sebadoh he sketched out earlier this year on his fourth album, 'Wakin On A Pretty Daze'. With its wheeling guitars and Vile's languid drawl, it's dreamy stuff.
Chris Cottingham, writer

4. Mogwai
Remurdered

As that 're-' prefix might suggest, Mogwai offer no surprises here. But if it's romantic, menacing and brooding slow-burns of chest-swelling intensity you seek, then step right in, pal. This first taste of eighth album 'Rave Tapes' has rippling electronics, growling bass and heart-hammering drums in all the right places, the band stretching their mettle after the sombre delicacy of their soundtrack work on *The Returned*. Well, if your *modus* is *operandi*, why fix it?
Emily Mackay, writer

5. Sky Ferreira
24 Hours

'24 Hours' is about the prospect of someone leaving you – maybe to go abroad, maybe to go to jail. "*We still have time for 24 hours/For 24 hours you're still mine*", Ferreira sings on the latest track from her debut album 'Night Time, My Time', but don't let the banal lyrics put you off. It's a blast of cloudbusting synths, tinkling keys and a bassline that recalls Robyn's 'Dancing On My Own'.
Lucy Jones, Deputy Editor, NME.COM

6. John Talabot
Without You

The man from Barcelona whose music perfectly captures getting burnt and battered in a foreign country returns with more of the glorious same. Taken from his recent 'DJ Kicks' mix, 'Without You' carries on where Talabot's 2012 'Fin' album left off and pumps highly concentrated bubbles of bliss into each of its five fuzzy minutes. It's as delicious on the ears as clearing a blockage of seawater.
Kurt Murphy, writer

7. Childish Gambino
3005

After his recent confessional outburst on Instagram, the actor-turned-rapper told *NME*: "I'm not having a personality crisis, more like a personality burst. I just wanted to be honest." Now Donald Glover delivers this moving joint from his new album 'Because The Internet'. It doesn't delve into the insecurities he's recently aired, but instead centres on a piston-pumping drop that Kendrick Lamar would be proud of.
Greg Cochrance, Editor, NME.COM

8. Arcade Fire
Afterlife

It might not be as instantly arresting as the stupendous 'Reflektor', but 'Afterlife' definitely has the same DNA: propelled by a tropical disco beat and chord shifts of grand self-importance, it's a pop song of epic proportions. It finds a band increasingly fixated on the supernatural contemplating the great unknown: "*Afterlife – I think I saw what happens next*", sings Win, before not really revealing the answer.
Dan Stubbs, News Editor

9. Honeyblood
Kissing On You

Glasgow duo Honeyblood want to sock you right between the eyes with new song 'Kissing On You', a power-pop ode to being tangled up in a relationship, the knots of which are too tight to loosen. "*I'm only interested in kissing on you*", sings Stina Tweeddale over punchy garage-rock guitars and hazy vocals reminiscent of Best Coast by way of The Vaselines. All this and it's only the B-side of their debut single 'Bud'.
David Renshaw, News Reporter

10. SpaceGhostPurrp
Petro

Taken from a new Raider Klan compilation 'Tales From The Underground', this new cut from 4AD's SpaceGhostPurrp is a fiendish taster track that follows his 2012 debut LP 'Mysterious Phonk: Chronicles Of SpaceGhostPurrp'. As ever, the man from Miami is tapping the demonic Memphis horrorcore sound made famous by Triple 6 Mafia and fringe figures like Tommy Wright III. It's a nasty track but in a very good way. Blaze up some petrol and get stuck in.
Phil Hebblethwaite, writer

ESSENTIAL NEW TRACKS

▶LISTEN TO THEM ALL AT NME.COM/ONREPEAT NOW

11. Enter Shikari
Rat Race

The third of Enter Shikari's 'three singles for 2013' (following 'The Paddington Frisk' and 'Radiate') begins with finger-tapping from guitarist Rory Clewlow. The song's message is obvious: "*The purpose of the rat race defeats me/When we're gone what's left behind?*" And the brass instruments in the background lend hope to a song full of anger at mundane day-to-day existence.
Tom Howard, Reviews Editor

12. Perfect Pussy
I

Perfect Pussy's debut demo tape 'I Have Lost All Desire For Feeling' implies some degree of dead-eyed narcissism, but opener 'I' makes it clear that Meredith Graves hasn't given up on the desire returning. Her desperate voice cuts through the Japandroids/Melt Banana squall like wax through watercolour as she sings with heartbreaking honesty about broken female friendships, forcing herself to find hope and objectivity amid the ruins of betrayal.
Laura Snapes, Features Editor

13. Real Lies
World Peace

Real Lies are three guys from north London who've translated the euphoria of being high at a house party at 3am into a four-minute baggy dance tune. Like labelmates Jagwar Ma they're not afraid to let their beats get loose, and they've also learned from New Order's textbook for crafting an indie dancefloor filler. The result doesn't just amphetishise the past, it sounds like the party you want to be at right now.
Kevin EG Perry, Assistant Editor, NME.COM

14. Lady Gaga Feat. R Kelly
Do What U Want

"*We taking these haters and we're roughing 'em up/And we lay in the cut like we don't give a...*" Forget Lady Gaga's never-ending marketing campaign: she's back with a belter. Lots of 'Do What U Want' would be criticised by Simon Cowell on *The X Factor* for being a "bad habit" – the nose-wrinkling vocals, a guest rap from an R&B crooner and synths as flash as Knight Rider's dashboard. But hey, if you wanna leave Gaga's party, there's the door.
Eve Barlow, Deputy Editor

15. Diane Coffee
Green

Diane Coffee is the solo project of Foxygen drummer Shaun Fleming. 'Green' is taken from debut album 'My Friend Fish', which will be released before the end of the year. The fuzzy production, almost doo-wop backing vocals and mournful melody suggest more than a slight admiration of Phil Spector and US West Coast bands such as The Turtles. The name 'Diane Coffee' might sound like a club singer from Bolton, but there's nothing wrong with the music.
Andy Welch, writer

16. Baio
Welterweight

With his debut solo EP 'Sunburn', Vampire Weekend bassist Chris Baio unleashed this dance side project that allows him to cut loose from the intellectual indie of his day job. The second song from the imminent 'Mira' EP on Future Classic is a slap of twitchy Chicago house full of echoing piano licks. It's a 5am triumph.
Jenny Stevens, Deputy News Editor

17. Charlie Boyer & The Voyeurs
Evil Mothers

More evolution than revolution (a good thing, since CB&TV Mk I were pretty bloody great in the first place), 'Evil Mothers' takes the Voyeurs' Television-gone-glam formula and amps it up a little. Boyer's strangled "*woo-hoo*"s are as deadpan as they come, and the effortless swagger of the three-chord guitars that chug around him could not give any less of a fuck. Add some '70s backing harmonies and this track is anything but evil.
Lisa Wright, writer

18. Crows
Silver Tongues

Released for Halloween, Crows' second single is dark enough to raise a glass to the supernatural. It might not come with a slasher-style video, as their debut 'The Frankish Empire' did, but there are enough creepy thrills in the music. 'Silver Tongues' shudders along, the stomping bassline punctuated by howls and screeches and frontman James Cox purring ominously. Then the whole thing shifts up a gear for one final, ghoulish minute.
Rhian Daly, Assistant Reviews Editor

19. Jessie Ware
True Believers

OK, so all we've had to go on is some dodgy footage from a recent show in Dallas, Texas, but Jessie has debuted a new track and I had to froth about it. The Brixton girl's not rewriting her nu-soul rulebook just yet but this is a stunning come-hither serenade about escaping the city and "*getting lost forever*", with warm synths purring alongside a laidback guitar groove. Even through the camera-phone fuzz, she sounds better than ever.
Kate Hutchinson, writer

20. Marika Hackman
Cinnamon

Once more unto the sacrificial drum circle as supermodelrock kicks off. Marika Hackman is a 21-year-old Burberry model who was in a band with Cara Delevingne at school and has now recast herself, with the help of Johnny Flynn and Alt-J producer Charlie Andrew, as a high priestess of pagan worship. "*Honey bee, fill me with that sticky stuff*", she summons over doomy drums and a hook seemingly played on a submarine radar.
Mark Beamount, writer

JENN FIVE, ANDY FORD, EMILIE BAILEY, TOM MARTIN, DAN DENNISON

Lou Reed

2 March, 1942 to 27 October, 2013

"Devastating news," said Iggy Pop following the death of his old friend Lou Reed in Southampton, New York, last Sunday. Aged 71, Reed passed away five months after undergoing a liver transplant, leaving a back catalogue of brilliant, uncompromising music and a reputation that's as fearsome as they get.

Born in Brooklyn in 1942, Lewis Allan Reed was long destined to be a loose cannon. At 17 his parents sent him to electroshock therapy in an attempt to 'cure' him of homosexual thoughts. It instead gave him a taste for the darker side of society that would forever feed into his work. A self-taught guitarist, Reed began writing songs during his drug-fuelled studies at Syracuse College. Moving to New York, he would soon become a vision of monochrome, beatnik cool as founder of The Velvet Underground, whose association with Andy Warhol blurred the lines between art and pop music. The group's debut album, 'The Velvet Underground & Nico', was last week named the fifth greatest of all time by *NME*.

Though not commercially successful at the time, The Velvet Underground's music – and willingness to tackle the taboo subjects of drugs and sex – set a blueprint for art-house rock that inspired generations to follow, from proto-punks Television and The Modern Lovers to The Smiths and The Strokes, one of many New York bands who took Reed's attitude and sound as an unimpeachable

GIJSBERT HANEKROOT/GETTY

blueprint for New York cool. Just this year, Alex Turner this year told *NME* that Reed's sleazy, hit-filled 1972 solo album 'Transformer' – written and recorded with friend and fan David Bowie – was a touchpoint for Arctic Monkeys while writing 'AM'.

A famously bad-tempered character, Reed refused to give fans an easy ride throughout his long, post-Velvets solo career, following the accessible 'Transformer' with 1973's brutal 'Berlin', 1974's horn-packed 'Sally Can't Dance' and the difficult noise experiment 'Metal Machine Music' a year later. Never worried by critical responses to his work, Reed once told Lester Bangs, "My bullshit is worth more than other people's diamonds."

Recent years saw Reed indulge a passion for t'ai chi, and an undying desire to keep innovating: 2003's 'The Raven' was a double album based on the works of Edgar Allan Poe, and 2011's universally panned 'Lulu' saw him team up with metal titans Metallica. Despite ill health, Reed recently declared an intention to return to the stage – and waxed lyrical about Kanye West's 'Yeezus' in a fiercely passionate review he posted online. As he once said: "I'm in this business for too long to be half-hearted about anything."

Survived by his wife, performance artist and composer Laurie Anderson, Reed will be remembered as one of the music world's most explosive, important characters, a blinking neon beacon in a world of grey. He was, as David Bowie put it, "a master". ■ MATT WILKINSON

Lou Reed, performing in Amsterdam, April 1977

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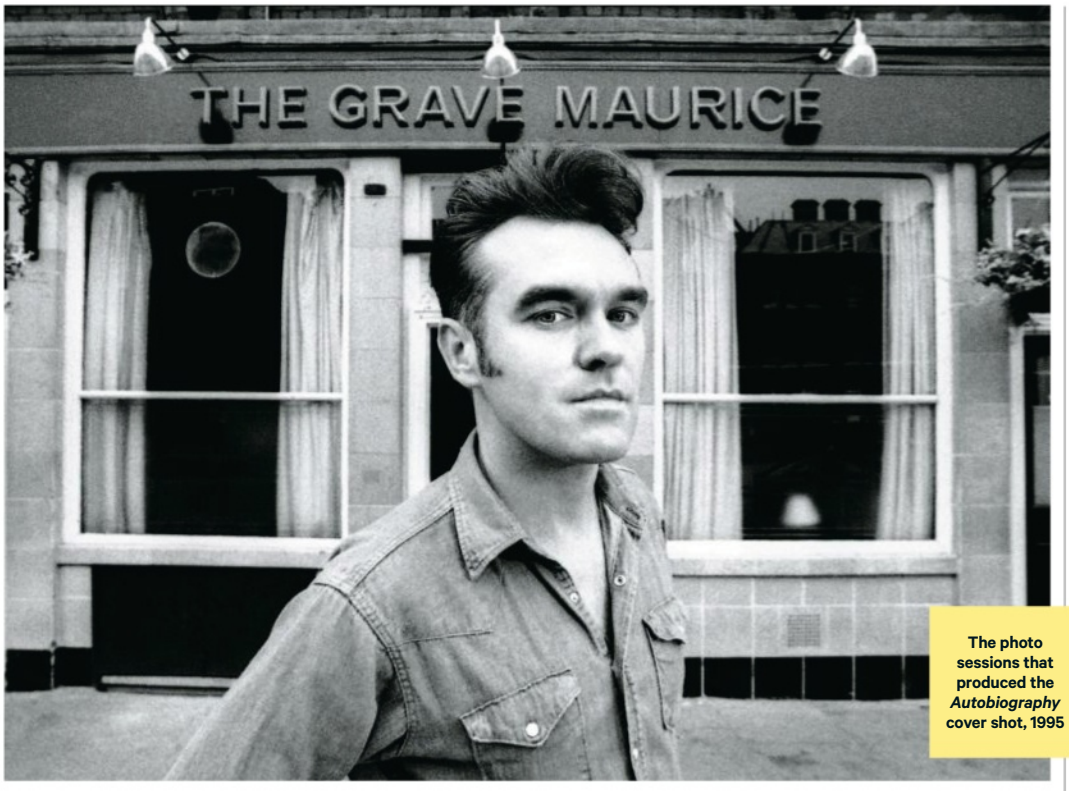


The photo sessions that produced the *Autobiography* cover shot, 1995

Morrissey And I

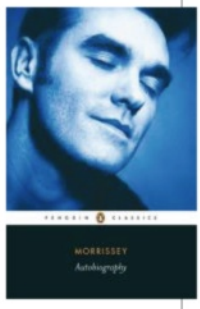
As Morrissey's *Autobiography* outsells the new Bridget Jones, photographer Paul Spencer recalls shooting its enigmatic cover portrait

"In autumn 1995 I was commissioned by Parlophone to take marketing and press shots of Morrissey for use on the forthcoming single 'Sunny'. At that time Morrissey had apparently become infatuated with the East End and all things Kray, so I was instructed to meet him before dawn on the Whitechapel Road, where we would shoot him on the pavement outside The Grave Maurice pub, where the Kray twins used to drink.

"I arrived at six with my assistant and make-up artist, who had spent the previous two days trying to source the 'special' make-up requested by Morrissey. It was cold, wet and miserable, and we were not entirely relaxed due to the number of people who had wished us good luck while telling us how difficult Morrissey can be.

"At 6.30 the man arrived – in an extremely good mood. He wanted to get it done before the market traders rocked up, and as the damp dark turned to damp grey he seemed a little self-conscious. That soon wore off as traders began to arrive and greet him warmly. It seems he had been welcomed in as an honorary Eastender.

"The next day we were in a remote recording studio in the country. It was a glorious autumn day. There was a posse of young rockabilly types enjoying the outdoor pool but sadly we were to shoot inside. It was dark, so I decided to pull in for the close-ups. At the time I was in the habit of asking my sitters to lean back and close their eyes – I was planning to do a book of eyes-closed celebrities. Morrissey liked the idea and obliged with enthusiasm. He really liked it, and still does – that's the image he used on his autobiography. He was a model sitter." ■



"MORRISSEY HAD BECOME INFATUATED WITH THE KRAY TWINS"
Paul Spencer

▶To read NME's verdict on Moz's book, turn to page 31

MY LIFE IN A SUITCASE

FIVE TOURING ESSENTIALS
Jake Bugg

BOOK
Meditations, by Marcus Aurelius

"It's so complex that I have to go back over some of his ideas once in a while. He was in charge of the whole Roman Empire, which was very religious, yet he's questioning the notions of space, time and the gods."

FILM
Robot & Frank

"It's about an old cat burglar called Frank who gets a robot because he's dying. Frank starts teaching the robot how to pick locks so he can take him robbing with him. That makes it sound mad, but it's quite sad."

BOXSET
The Wire

"I was late coming to it, but I loved it. I could see parallels between Baltimore and where I grew up, plus it introduced me to a load of drugs references, which sparked the idea for 'Kingpin' on my new album."

HOME COMFORT
My guitar

"I bring a portable vinyl player and table tennis table on tour. I'm decent at table tennis. But, ultimately, I'd have to say my guitars. They all mean as much to me, but I've just got a 1949 Martin acoustic that's beautiful."

GAME
FIFA 14

"I'm alright at it, but all my mates and crew are really good, so I have my good and shit days. I play as Notts County, and it's nice when we beat mates' teams like Tottenham and Newcastle."

KINGDOM COME, A BOOK FEATURING THE ENTIRE MORRISSEY SHOOT, IS CURRENTLY SEEKING CROWDFUNDING. FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT UNBOUND.CO.UK/BOOKS/KINGDOM-COME PHOTOS: PAUL SPENCER, DEAN CHALKLEY, REX

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‘A MASTERPIECE’ THE TIMES

VILLAGERS { Awayland }

★★★★
THE GUARDIAN

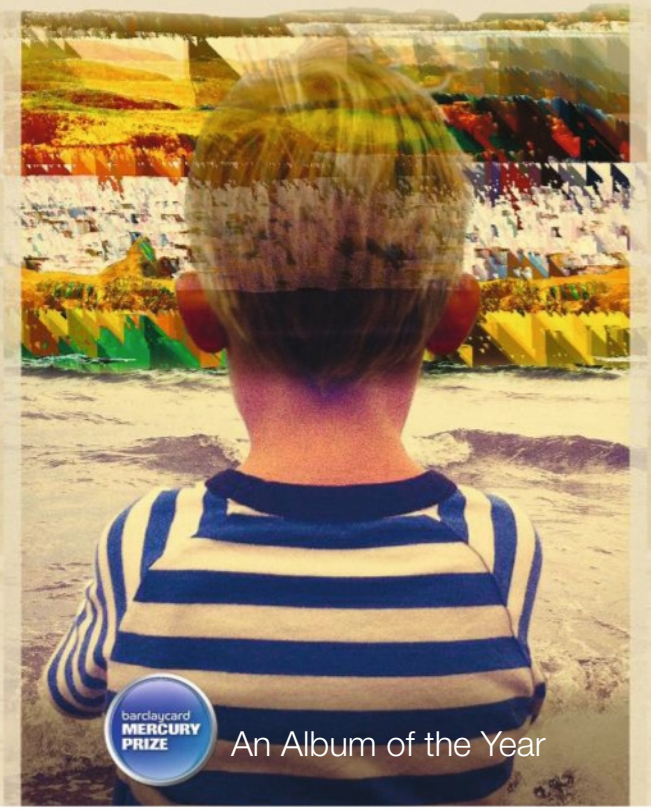
★★★★★
THE INDEPENDENT

★★★★
THE TIMES

★★★★★
★★★★
CLASH

★★★★★
★★★
UNCUT

Domino



★★★★
THE TELEGRAPH

★★★★
Q

★★★★
MOJO

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DROWNED IN SOUND

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On set with Fresh Meat

As Channel 4 sitcom *Fresh Meat* returns to TV, we visit the cast to find Supergrass' Gaz Coombes hanging out with the students – and hear the worst song he's ever written

When *NME* first encounters Jack Whitehall on the set of student sitcom *Fresh Meat*, he's in drag, dressed up as a Hooters waitress with a blonde wig, voluptuous fake bust and tiny orange hotpants. "I sent a text to my girlfriend of me dressed like this," he says. "I'm also sporting a Nazi uniform in this episode. But weirdly, this upset her more..."

The comedian/actor is shooting the penultimate episode of series three, which begins on Channel 4 this week. A fancy dress party has gone tits up, and for reasons we won't give away here, Whitehall's character, braying posho JP, is trying to kill Kingsley, the neurotic Pete Doherty wannabe, who's currently dressed as George Harrison. At one point, JP is almost suffocated by his own cleavage as the pair grapple on the floor. "You can't hurt me with boobs, Kingsley!" he shouts. "I thrive on boobs!"

Since debuting in 2011, the Channel 4 comedy drama about six students at the fictional Manchester Medlock University has proved both a ratings and critical success. Devised by *Peep Show* creators Sam Bain and Jesse Armstrong, it pulls off the tricky feat of accurately summing up what it's like to be at university; riotously funny, poignant and true, it's been voted Best TV Show at the NME Awards for two years in a row.

"The first time we had any indication that it was becoming a phenomenon was when we heard we'd crashed the 4oD website because there were so many people trying to re-watch the programme," remembers Greg McHugh, who plays beardy, bespectacled oddball Howard. "What was surreal was when I discovered Radiohead were watching series one on their tour," says Charlotte Richie, who plays try-hard English undergraduate Oregon. "Even more bizarrely, Prince Harry is a fan."

Not all the attention has been positive. Whitehall is so convincing in his role as plummy antihero JP that is he regularly accosted by angry ex-public schoolboys. "I had a guy come up to me in a bar – carrying two bottles of Cristal champagne, his shirt open – who said: 'You've given Stowe a bad name!' I looked at him and thought, 'Push comes to shove, you're not doing too well for the Stowe PR machine.' But then Stowe, the actual school, loves the character so much they asked me to come and give a speech. It almost feels like that 'Springtime For Hitler' syndrome where the more you try and be a monster, the more people think, 'He's brilliant!'"

"IT WAS A TRICKY SONG TO WRITE BECAUSE IT HAD TO BE A BIT SHIT"
Gaz Coombes

WorldMags.net

(L–R) Kingsley, Josie, JP, Vod, Howard and Oregon

MEAT AND GREET

What does series three have in store for the students of *Fresh Meat*? The actors behind the characters reveal all

Kingsley

Joe Thomas: "Kingsley becomes an unlikely lothario in this series. For him, his music is a statement about who he is – and he thinks he's recorded his own 'Paranoid Android'. Me and my brother were in a band called Seamus Speaks, and we used to ape Blur. So when it came to recording the Graham Coxon song, I just sounded like his clone, which was probably embarrassing for him. To be honest, I think Gaz from Supergrass has written a really nice tune. It's probably too good for Kingsley."

Josie

Kimberley Nixon: "At the start of the series, she's in Southampton and only seen via an iPad. Last year, Josie went off the rails and did some terrible things – breaking somebody's arm, drilling through a woman's face, faking a burglary. It was more and more extreme. I complained to Sam and Jesse [the writers], 'Josie's a maniac and nobody's going to like her any more.' And they said, 'It's funny because of your Welsh accent and the fact you have the eyes of an angel.' So they keep giving me awful things to do. My main prop at the moment is a vodka bottle."

JP

Jack Whitehall: "JP's ignorant and emotionally retarded. In this series, he has a relationship with a girl and it exposes how terrible he is at any kind of social interaction, especially with women. If they do a *Skins*-style series set 15 years in the future, he's basically going to be Foreign Secretary. There's a good bit where Kingsley's music snobbery clashes with JP's lack of taste. In series two, he attacked James Blunt, and in this one he slags off Mumford & Sons, who JP thinks are edgy. JP says: 'First Blunters, now Mumfers... is nothing sacred?!'"

Vod

Zawe Ashton: "We see a new side to Vod in relationships. We learn a lot about why she is kind of 'one man for every hour of the day'. Her mum comes to visit, so we see her in a domestic relationship as well. I would have loved to have been Vod at that age. She doesn't give a shit; there's no airs, no graces."

Howard

Greg McHugh: "In his own world, Howard has become more confident since his failed relationship with Sabine in series two. So he's slowly coming out of his shell, but every time he does, he kind of gets slapped in the face a little bit. He's still geeky, fragile, stubborn and loyal – and he's still unironically wearing the kind of jumpers a lot of kids in Hoxton and Shoreditch would kill for."

Oregon

Charlotte Ritchie: "In the summer Vod and Oregon travelled to South America – but Oregon comes back early. She'd hoped to have a spiritual experience, but it was scuppered by the fact that Vod's got a hot new Mexican lover, Javier, who doesn't speak any English, so Oregon spent three months translating graphic sexual chats."

Ex-Supergrass man Gaz Coombes (right) wrote 'Drone Alone' for *Fresh Meat*'s Kingsley

The authenticity of the scripts is matched by the painstaking attention to detail of the set design. Inside the hangar-like studio in Manchester, the production team have recreated the interior and exterior of a house in the city's teeming student area with forensic accuracy. Each character's bedroom is full of clever touches: on the desk in Oregon's room sits an essay which has been marked in red pen ('93% Good Girl!'), while Kingsley's corner contains his guitar and a poster of sensitive indie-boy favourites Villagers.

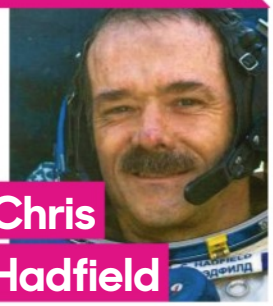
That guitar is set to get a lot more action in series three, which sees Kingsley – portrayed by former *Inbetweener* Joe Thomas – launch into a protest anthem at a student sit-in. The tune has been written by Supergrass frontman Gaz Coombes, following in the footsteps of Blur's Graham Coxon, who wrote 'The Implodium Implodes' for the last run. "We seem to be collecting Britpoppers," notes music supervisor Matt Biffa. "We'll have to recruit Noel Gallagher next. Get Jarvis on the phone!"

"It was a tricky song to write because it had to sort of be a little bit shit," laughs Coombes, who's on set to oversee the recording. "I like to think I have a talent for great melodies and good tunes. I kept asking my wife: 'How do I know if it's shit? Where's the line?' In the end, I just imagined Kingsley earnestly singing it as if it's the best song he's ever written. It's turned out like 'The End' by The Doors meets 'The Bewlay Brothers' by Bowie."

A change of clothes for Thomas, and he's in the vocal booth recording Kingsley's opus, named 'Drone Alone'. "Let's build it up to ridiculousness," commands Coombes, as Thomas belts out heartfelt nonsense about "*hollow-eyed fuckbots with intimacy issues*". But will Kingsley ever achieve his dream? After all, cringey lyrics and a lack of self-awareness never stopped Johnny Borrell. "I think Kingsley's quite desperate to be in *NME*, you know," says Thomas, coming out of the booth. "If he keeps up this quality of ghostwriters, I've no doubt that he will." ■ GARY RYAN

▶For a sneak preview of *Fresh Meat* series three, check out the blog on NME.COM

THE MINI INTERVIEW



Chris Hadfield

Musical astronaut

You're famous for singing David Bowie's 'Space Oddity' on the International Space Station. How did that happen?
"I recorded a Christmas carol up there and my son said, 'That's OK, but people really want to hear 'Space Oddity'.'"

Were you keen?
"It's an odd, druggy tune about an astronaut dying in space. Why would I record that? He said: 'Dad, you're not doing it for you. You're doing it for everybody else.' I said if he rewrote the words so that the astronaut lives, I'd record it."

Did Bowie mind you tinkering with the lyrics?
"I called Bowie's legal team and told them I was phoning from outer space. I thought it might help. Bowie heard it and said he loved it, which was great."

Were you aware of how many people saw it?
"It went crazy! I was watching from orbit, but then I had to fly the shuttle home. When I landed, the first thing anyone said was: 'Hey Chris, I saw your music video!'"

Have you listened to 'The Next Day'?
"I've heard a couple of tracks and they're cool."

You're heading to the UK to promote your new book *An Astronaut's Guide To Life On Earth*. How will you spend your time here?
"I want to meet Brian May and Brian Cox. Those guys know a lot about space."

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The NME drugs survey: the results

5,295 respondents **62.9%** **37.1%**

55.6% in education
37.9% in work
4% unemployed

Following our investigation into the drugs seized at this year's festivals, we asked you about your drug habits. Here's what over 5,000 of you told us

DRUGS AND MUSIC

44% of you say you're more likely to take drugs while listening to certain types of music

THOSE GENRES ARE:

50% DANCE

28.8% INDIE/ROCK

15.3% OTHER

- Hip-hop 3.2%
- Punk 1.4%
- R&B 0.7%
- Metal 0.7%

3/5 of you think artists who take drugs make better music

AT MUSIC FESTIVALS:

28% of you **always** take drugs

30% of you **never** do

DRUGS AND YOU

2/5 of you have tried a **'legal high'**

74% of you have taken drugs in the last 12 months

THE DRUGS INCLUDED:

- CANNABIS **41.6%**
- MDMA/ECSTASY **21.5%**
- COCAINE **3.7%**
- 'LEGAL HIGHS' **2.6%**
- MEPHEDRONE **1.1%**
- OTHER **3.5%**

HALF of you were aged **15–16** when you first took drugs

CANNABIS was the first drug most of you tried **(77.5%)**
Only **1.6%** of you started with a 'legal high'

55% of you think you take more drugs than your parents did

YOUR EXPERIENCE

80% of you who take drugs say you do it to have fun

WE ASKED YOU TO DESCRIBE YOUR FIRST DRUG EXPERIENCE:

"Amazing. I felt like I had found something to take me away to a different place."

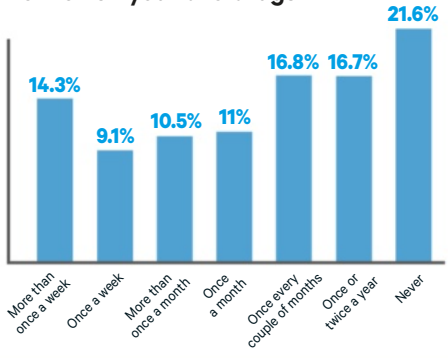
"I had a good experience. I was with friends who knew what they were doing, so if anything went wrong I felt safe."

"I was mistaking lamp posts for giraffes, cars for lions, and lights for fire."

"I smoked too much weed. Threw a whitey and was sick everywhere."

"Mix of 'legal highs'. Two days in hospital with an increased heart rate and 17 stitches."

How often you take drugs:



Where you were when you last took drugs:

- 20.5% Home
- 13.8% Festival
- 22.2% Friend's House
- 13.4% Party
- 9.5% Club

Gig **5%** Pub **3.6%** School/college/work **1.1%** Other **10.9%**

THE RISKS

Do you take notice of warnings about the dangers of taking drugs? **YES 66.1%**

Are you worried about your drug use? **NO 90.2%**

Should drugs be legalised? **YES 54.5%**

Should 'legal highs' be banned? **NO 53.8%**

Do drug-related deaths at festivals, clubs and gigs make you less likely to take drugs? **YES 43.7%**

YES NO NOT SURE SOMETIMES

▶ **The winner of the draw for £100 of SeeTickets vouchers: Christina Massue, Bolton**

■ ANALYSIS BY JENNY STEVENS ■ DESIGN BY DANI LIQUIERI

WorldMags.net

IT'S NOT OFFENSIVE WHEN KANYE BRINGS JESUS ONSTAGE, IT'S JUST SILLY

BY **REVEREND CANON GILES FRASER**

The rapper has JC on his 'Yeezus' tour. Giles Fraser, priest-in-charge at St Mary's, Newington, London, sees the funny side

So who does Kanye West think he is? The answer, it seems, is Jesus. Back in 2006, he appeared on the cover of *Rolling Stone* magazine dressed up like Jesus, complete with a crown of thorns. Now, his 'Yeezus' tour, which began in Seattle last week, sees him delivering rap sermons from a mountain top and introducing a "White Jesus" onstage with the words, "I want to be like Christ." Some people will be offended by it, but some people will be offended by anything. The use of religious iconography is a well-worn trope. To be offended by it is to treat this with more significance that it deserves. I just think he's an idiot.

To understand this peculiar behaviour, it's worth consulting Wikipedia on the subject of a messiah complex. It says: "The term 'messiah complex' is not addressed in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), but symptoms of the disorder closely resemble those found in individuals suffering from grandiose delusions (GD) or delusions of grandeur." For Kanye West, the world revolves around Kanye West. He recently explained that his creative instincts are those of a three-year-old. Well, he behaves just like it as well.

Having an out-of-control ego like a three-year-old's, combined with huge wealth and celebrity, means there is no-one to smack his bottom and send him to bed without any tea. 'No-one can control me' is West's most familiar refrain. 'I only answer to God,' he insists. I guess the only answer to this is to laugh and walk away from the crazy.

Unlike Madonna, the other obvious comparison for adopting religious imagery, West is not using the juxtaposition of sex and religion as a cheap way of generating controversy. He is not being an iconoclast. He is not trying to be offensive. It's worse than that – he actually means it. West is an irony-free zone.

So let me respond, without irony: Dear Kanye, Christianity is not about the enhancement of your own ego. It is about the displacement of ego. Jesus wasn't a celebrity. The important bit happens to him when everyone else has run away. He told his followers to learn how to fail. He told them to give all their money away (not just give a certain amount away to look good). He told them they had to learn to die a lonely, painful and miserable death. If you want to be Christ, go ahead. Ah, but no. He doesn't really. "You know, it's just some Kanye West shit, really," he said recently when questioned on the show. Well, we agree about that then. ■

▶For more opinion and debate, head to NME.COM/blogs

LOST ALBUMS #4

Climate Of Hunter Scott Walker (1984)

Chosen by Gemma Thompson, Savages

"This was Scott Walker's only record in the '80s. It suffered poor reviews and was eventually deleted, but I couldn't live without it. There's a dissonance that ripples through the songs in the form of strings or keyboards, and the voice holds it at the edge of collapse. The lyrics are abstract, dystopian, and intentionally trying to elude any comprehension. It took me three attempts to get past the first song. Once I connected with it, I realised how ballsy it was to make a record like this. Now, listening to it is a beautiful experience."

▶THE DETAILS

▶**RELEASE DATE** March 1984
▶**LABEL** Virgin
▶**BEST TRACKS** Rawhide, Sleepwalkers Woman
▶**WHERE TO FIND IT**
A remastered version was released in 2006, and is still available online and in stores
▶**LISTEN ONLINE** On Spotify

RICHARD JOHNSON, CORBIS, NATIONAL PICTURES

IN THE STUDIO

Stella Mozgawa, Theresa Wayman, Emily Kokal and Jenny Lee Lindberg in LA, 2013

Warpaint

Written in a giant igloo in the desert and recorded with super-producer Flood, Warpaint's new album puts guitars on the back burner

It's been a long three years since Warpaint's debut album was released. Aside from the occasional festival date, fans have recently been surviving on a 95-second teaser film by dark lord of music vids Chris Cunningham, director for Aphex Twin and Björk and, since April 2012, husband to Warpaint bassist Jenny Lee Lindberg. It's a mere snippet from a longer film to come – Cunningham has been documenting the entire process of recording the follow-up to 'The Fool'.

"It was a really mellow, super-relaxed thing," explains Jenny down the phone from LA. "[The filming] happened really naturally and he's very mindful of not wanting to distract from whatever is happening. And from my perspective, I have never felt more comfortable around a human being ever in my life."

"WE'RE INTO R&B AND DRUM MACHINES, NOT JUST STANDARD ROCK"
Emily Kokal

Cunningham's otherworldly visual style should be the perfect match for the LA group's eerie new sound. We were played a selection of new songs at the headquarters of UK label Rough Trade. While still indebted to warped guitar pedals, stoned-sounding vocals and baggy basslines, there's a bratty, boisterous stomp to 'Disco-Vary' and a leftfield, almost Radiohead-like groove in others. "It's more than classic guitars. We're into rap and R&B things that have drum machines and ambience, music that's more than standard rock," says singer Emily Kokal. "I only play guitar on maybe two songs – everything else is keys, so it's definitely different."

The process of reinvention began last summer in America's Joshua Tree National Park. After two years of touring (and following Stella Mozgawa's brief jaunt as Kurt Vile's drummer), Warpaint began their lengthy jamming sessions last year in The Dome – a large wooden igloo that offers the perfect acoustics to achieve their spacious sound. "Every morning we'd get up, go grocery shopping, make tea and hang out. It was one of those times in your life you'll remember, because it stands outside the normal pace of life," explains Emily nostalgically.

After mostly self-producing their debut, the four-piece this time brought in super-producer Flood, known for his work with U2, New Order, PJ Harvey and Foals. Having such an authoritative presence join the group was difficult, says Jenny: "I was excited to see what we would do on our own, so when we decided to have a producer I was apprehensive because I didn't want to follow someone else's vision. At first it was a little bit awkward, but if there was something that we didn't agree with and we stuck by it, he would back down."

With the album now fully mixed and mastered, its release – in their typically mellow, super-relaxed style – is on hold until the artwork is completed. After all, they're just biding their time before they reaffirm their place as one of the most exciting bands of recent years. "We wanted to create a sonic soundscape and a mood," adds Emily. "Flood has made classic albums, and maybe what constitutes a classic is just nailing that moment in time and capturing it. Something that gets under your skin."

So it's a future classic, then? "Well," she laughs, "I wouldn't be the one to say something like that..."

■ HARRIET GIBSONE

▶THE DETAILS

- ▶ **TITLE** TBC
- ▶ **RELEASE DATE** January 2014
- ▶ **PRODUCER** Flood
- ▶ **RECORDED** The Dome, Joshua Tree; Assault and Battery, London; 5 Star Recorders, LA
- ▶ **TRACKS INCLUDE** Biggie, Love Is To Die, Disco-Vary
- ▶ **JENNY LEE LINDBERG SAYS** "I think this record is more sexy and a bit more groovy and darker than anything we've done before."

Video director Chris Cunningham

CAMERA PRESS/TIME OUT, MIA KIRBY

ANATOMY OF AN ALBUM

"IT HAS A CERTAIN WORLD-WEARINESS"
Beck

THIS WEEK...

Beck: Mutations

The unofficial follow-up to 1996's 'Odelay' caused a legal ruckus but became one of Beck's best-loved records

THE BACKGROUND
Beck never intended this low-key LP of (mostly) older songs to be an official follow-up to the Grammy-winning, multimillion-selling 'Odelay' – that was to be 'Midnite Vultures', released the following year. 'Mutations' was meant as little more than a stopgap on the Bong Load label, thanks to a kink of Beck's deal with Geffen which allowed him to record for small indie labels. Working for the first time with Nigel Godrich (who would go on to produce 2002's 'Sea Change' and 2006's 'The Information'), Beck and his band recorded a song a day, every day, for two weeks, a process Beck described as "energising". Despite the huge difference in style from 'Odelay', when Geffen heard 'Mutations' they decided they wanted it for themselves, opening a legal can of worms that clouded the album's release.

◀ STORY BEHIND THE SLEEVE
The image of Beck wrapped in clingfilm was taken by photographer Autumn De Wilde, who is best known for her work with Elliott Smith and The White Stripes. Beck and De Wilde became friends on the 1995 Lollapalooza tour, and she was invited to document the recording of 'Mutations'.

FIVE FACTS
1 Beck wrote many of the songs during a 15-week period when he lived without electricity. This contributed to the album's stripped-back, acoustic vibe, and made sampling – an integral part of 'Odelay' – impossible.

2 When Geffen decided to release 'Mutations' against Beck's wishes, he retaliated by refusing to play a single show in support of the album, or to make videos for any of its three singles.

3 The tight recording schedule was due to Nigel Godrich having only a fortnight before starting work on another project. Beck says he knew the record was finished when the taxi company called to say Godrich's cab to the airport was on its way.

4 'Sing It Again' was written in 1994 for Johnny Cash's 'Unchained' album, but Beck decided not to submit the song because he thought it was "rubbish". Cash eventually covered 'Rowboat', from 1994's 'Stereopathetic Soulmanure', instead.

5 Hidden track 'Diamond Bollocks' is a composite of eight separate songs Beck and his band recorded in one frenzied session, edited together into a single track.

LYRIC ANALYSIS
"Cold brains, unmoved/Untouched, unglued, alone at last" ('Cold Brains')
Death and decay are recurring themes on 'Mutations'. The opening track tries to express what it's like to be physically, mentally and creatively spent.

"They're chewing dried meat in a house of disrepute/The dust of opiates and syphilis patients on brochure vacations" ('Lazy Flies')
Beck describes this song as "an imaginary movie about some colonial, futuristic backwater", but it also contains autobiographical flashes of the poor LA barrio where he grew up.

"These withered hands have dug for a dream/Sifted through sand and leftover nightmares" ('We Live Again')
The death of his grandfather – an avant-garde artist known for his collages – in 1995 had a profound effect on Beck. This song is a tribute to the man and his art.

WHAT WE SAID THEN
"It swerves the style diktats in favour of pure emotion. Beck remains the Midas Of Cool, but most importantly, it's his heart that's made of gold." 8/10 Victoria Segal, *NME*, October 31, 1998

WHAT WE SAY NOW
Swapping hipster irony for his own off-kilter brand of earnestness, Beck's sixth LP is sombre yet playful, and arguably a better, more significant record than the 'true' follow-up to 'Odelay', 1999's 'Midnite Vultures'.

FAMOUS FAN
Marianne Faithfull liked 'Mutations' so much she approached Beck to work on her 2002 album, 'Kissin' Time'. "I wrote the lyrics beforehand," she remembered. "I thought, 'Oh fuck, I've got a genius coming in here and I'd better have something done.'"

IN THEIR OWN WORDS
"I think there's a certain world-weariness on the record, but I just think of it as being part of the condition of our whole way of living. I don't know anybody who doesn't reach a point of exhaustion on a regular basis. We don't know how to live any more."
Beck, 1998

THE AFTERMATH
Geffen's decision to release 'Mutations' resulted in Beck suing both of his labels and being countersued in return for breach of contract. The unfortunate outcome was that he would no longer switch between indies and majors, and he became less prolific. But 'Mutations' itself has gone on to become one of his best-loved albums.

▶THE DETAILS
▶**RECORDED** March–April 1998 ▶**RELEASE DATE** November 3, 1998 ▶**LENGTH** 49:17 ▶**PRODUCERS** Beck Hansen, Nigel Godrich ▶**STUDIO** Ocean Way Recording, Hollywood ▶**HIGHEST UK CHART POSITION** 24 ▶**UK SALES** 100,000 ▶**WORLDWIDE SALES** 1m (estimated) ▶**SINGLES** Tropicalia, Cold Brains, Nobody's Fault But My Own ▶**TRACKLISTING** ▶1. Cold Brains ▶2. Nobody's Fault But My Own ▶3. Lazy Flies ▶4. Canceled Check ▶5. We Live Again ▶6. Tropicalia ▶7. Dead Melodies ▶8. Bottle Of Blues ▶9. O Maria ▶10. Sing It Again ▶11. Static 1 ▶12. Diamond Bollocks (hidden track)

WORDS: BARRY NICOLSON

NEWS DESK

THE NUMBERS

2
Number of tractors Jamie Cook rides in Arctic Monkeys' 'One For The Road' video

£175
Eye-watering price of Daft Punk's deluxe 'Random Access Memories' boxset

50
Pieces in the orchestra Kanye West hired to play along to his proposal to Kim Kardashian

300,000
Listeners shed by Nick Grimshaw's *Radio 1 Breakfast Show* in the past three months

BIG MOUTH

"I felt so different and so crazy that people just left me alone. I always felt that they would vote me 'Most Likely To Kill Everyone At A High School Dance.'"

KURT COBAIN's long-lost PBS interview surfaces online

THE BIG QUESTION

WHAT SHOULD TOM CHAPLIN DO NOW KEANE HAVE CALLED IT QUITS?

Jamie MacColl
Bombay Bicycle Club
"I heard a rumour that he formed a band in rehab with the singer from The Darkness and Pete Doherty. I think they should reunite and see what happens."

Sandie Garland
NME reader
"I think he should focus on his family's charity, Rwanda Aid. That would have a much longer-lasting effect on the world than a few tolerable EPs."

Laura Snapes
NME Features Editor
"He should come and live with me and sing 'Somewhere Only We Know' to me every night at bedtime, recreating my very weird version of teen angst. He should not be allowed near any port."

WHO THE FUCK IS...

David Ruffley MP?

Tory, Labour or other?
He's a Tory who, bizarrely, ended up chatting with Doug Castle from Peace about protest songs on BBC Radio 5. He managed to make George Osborne look even less cool than usual.

How?
Ruffley let slip that the Chancellor is a Bob Dylan fan, saying he knows all the words to 'The Times They Are A-Changin".

And how did Doug respond?
He laughed and said, "It's just been ruined on so many levels." Winner.

GOOD WEEK ↔ BAD WEEK

Tom Hardy

Famous for playing the mask-wearing supervillain Bane in *The Dark Knight Rises*, British actor Tom Hardy is being lined up to play Elton John in new biopic *Rocketman*, on which the veteran singer is an executive producer. Rick Moranis must have been too busy.

Lana Del Rey

Lana has more to pout about than usual – she's struggling to write a follow-up to 'Born To Die'. "My muse is very fickle. She only comes to me sometimes, which is annoying." 'Muse', in case you were wondering, is industry slang for 'co-writers'.

AND FINALLY

Chapel Of Rest
Chapel Club limped out of action this week, their recent London gig being their last ever. The band said they were "setting CC aside as having outlived its usefulness," in a statement.

Misguided
Guided By Voices drummer Kevin Fennell is selling his drum kit on eBay with a starting price of $55,000. In support of the hefty price tag, he does say that the drums are "simply good looking".

Mazzy Star
Marilyn Manson is set to play Peter Pan's shadow in US TV show *Once Upon A Time*. A role that involves skulking around creepily in the background? Should be a breeze.

Official RECORD STORE Chart

TOP 40 ALBUMS 27 OCTOBER 2013

NEW 01

Arctic Monkeys
AM DOMINO

While Arctic Monkeys are busy conquering the UK's arenas, their fifth album 'AM' (and the 449th greatest of all time, according to us) is still dominating the charts eight weeks after release. It's back on top again.

NEW	2	Shulamith **Polica** MEMPHIS INDUSTRIES
NEW	3	Moon Landing **James Blunt** ATLANTIC/CUSTARD
NEW	4	Prism **Katy Perry** VIRGIN
▲	5	If You Wait **London Grammar** METAL & DUST RECORDINGS
▼	6	Psychic **Darkside** MATADOR
▼	7	Lightning Bolt **Pearl Jam** EMI
▼	8	Fanfare **Jonathan Wilson** BELLA UNION
▲	9	Tales Of Us **Goldfrapp** MUTE
▼	10	Days Are Gone **Haim** POLYDOR
▼	11	One Breath **Anna Calvi** DOMINO RECORDINGS
▲	12	Beautiful Rewind **Four Tet** TEXT
NEW	13	World Psychedelic Classics 5 **William Onyeabor** LUAKA BOP
▼	14	Tribute **John Newman** ISLAND
NEW	15	City Forgiveness **Wave Pictures** MOSHI MOSHI
NEW	16	Moondance **Van Morrison** RHINO
NEW	17	Music Has The Right To Children **Boards Of Canada** WARP
▼	18	Drone Logic **Daniel Avery** PHANTASY SOUNDS
▼	19	Until The Colours Run **Lanterns On The Lake** BELLA UNION
▼	20	Mechanical Bull **Kings Of Leon** RCA
▼	21	New **Paul McCartney** HEARMUSIC
▲	22	Fuzz **Fuzz** IN THE RED
▲	23	Perhaps Love **Jonathan & Charlotte** SONY CLASSICAL
▲	24	The Bones Of What You Believe **Chvrches** VIRGIN
▼	25	Splinter (Songs From A Broken Mind) **Gary Numan** MORTAL RECORDS
▲	26	Snapshot **Strypes** EMI
NEW	27	Geogaddi **Boards Of Canada** WARP
▼	28	Seasons Of Your Day **Mazzy Star** RHYMES OF AN HOUR
▼	29	Cosmic Machine **Cosmic Machine** BECAUSE MUSIC
NEW	30	Born To Die **Lana Del Rey** POLYDOR
NEW	31	Wenu Wenu **Omar Souleyman** RIBBON MUSIC
▼	32	Crimson/Red **Prefab Sprout** ICEBREAKER
NEW	33	The Best Of **Kylie Minogue** PARLOPHONE
NEW	34	All The Little Lights **Passenger** NETTWERK
▲	35	Factory Floor **Factory Floor** DFA
NEW	36	Love In Portofino **Andrea Bocelli** DECCA
▲	37	Jake Bugg **Jake Bugg** MERCURY
▼	38	Dream River **Bill Callahan** DRAG CITY
■	39	Our Version Of Events **Emeli Sande** VIRGIN
NEW	40	Random Access Memories **Daft Punk** COLUMBIA

The Official Charts Company compiles the Official Record Store Chart from sales through 100 of the UK's best independent record shops, from Sunday to Saturday.

TOP OF THE SHOPS

THIS WEEK
PIE & VINYL
SOUTHSEA

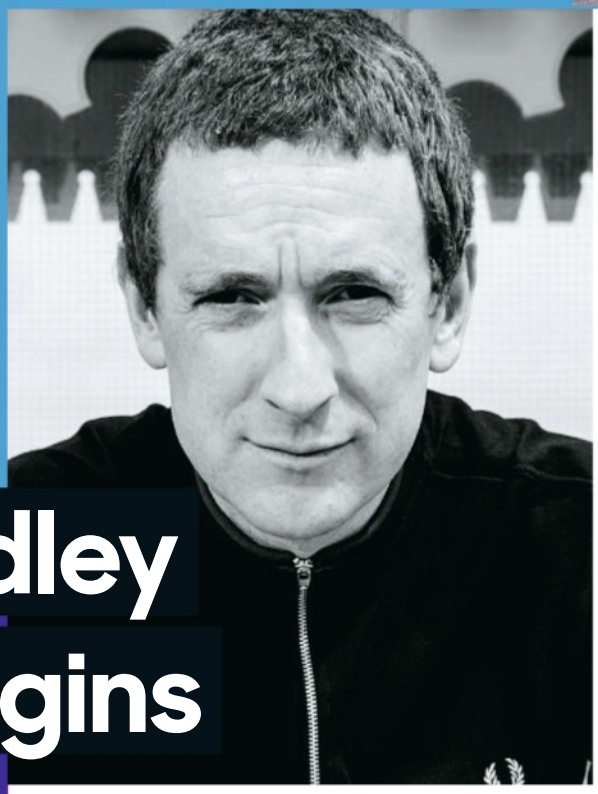
FOUNDED 2012
WHY IT'S GREAT They serve over 40 award-winning pies to sample whilst browsing, and have a hand in the brilliant new music-focused Southsea Festival.
TOP SELLER THIS WEEK
Lanterns On The Lake – 'Until The Colours Run'
THEY SAY "Pie & Vinyl aim to satisfy all your senses."

NEWSDESK COMPILED BY DAVID RENSHAW PHOTOS: REX FEATURES, FILM MAGIC, GETTY, AMY BRAMMALL, JENN FIVE

SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE

Paul Weller

Ian Brown



Bradley Wiggins

The UK's fastest mod

AS TOLD TO ANDY WELCH. BRADLEY WIGGINS HAS COLLABORATED WITH FRED PERRY TO CREATE A CYCLING-INSPIRED COLLECTION. FOR MORE DETAILS GO TO FREDPERRY.COM PHOTOS: TOM OXLEY, REX FEATURES

The Prodigy's Keith Flint

THE FIRST SONG I FELL IN LOVE WITH
'Into Tomorrow' – The Paul Weller Movement

"I heard it on the radio and felt compelled to go and buy it. It was the intro that got me, that guitar sound. I didn't know anything about Paul Weller at the time, but I'd seen Oasis and Ocean Colour Scene talking about him in interviews. I was 14 and I was very impressionable, so that was that. If you'd told me I'd end up onstage with Weller one day [Bradley played guitar on 'That's Entertainment' with Weller at a Crisis charity gig in December 2012], I'd have been blown away."

THE FIRST ALBUM I EVER BOUGHT
'Experience' – The Prodigy

"The Prodigy were like punk for me and my mates. Keith Flint was this outrageous, rebellious character and the rest of the band looked like they didn't give a fuck either. I was a big fan."

THE SONG THAT MAKES ME WANT TO DANCE
'(Love Is Like A) Heat Wave' – The Who

"It was originally a hit for Martha And The Vandellas, but The Who's cover is the best version of all. I was watching *Sister Act* a couple of days ago and I had a little dance in the living room to the bit where Whoopi Goldberg sings it."

THE SONG THAT MADE ME WANT TO PLAY GUITAR
'Live Forever' – Oasis

"So many kids of my generation learned to play the guitar because of Noel Gallagher. He made it feel like everyone could do it – he inspired a generation! Not to blow my own trumpet but it's a little bit like what I went through last summer winning the Tour De France. People thought, 'If Wiggo can do it, so can I,' and you saw people everywhere getting on their bikes."

THE SONG I CAN NO LONGER LISTEN TO
'Harry Kidnap' – Ocean Colour Scene

"It was written as a tribute to Paul Weller's dad, John, and around the time it was released, my grandad died. I can't listen to it any more because of the memories it stirs up."

THE SONG I DO AT KARAOKE
'That's Entertainment' – The Jam

"It's a safe choice – it's the only song I know I can sing. And I can play it on the guitar as well."

THE SONG I CAN'T GET OUT OF MY HEAD
'Trampoline' – Tinie Tempah feat. 2 Chainz

"This changes daily, but yesterday it was this Tinie Tempah one. Not that I love it, I just heard it in the morning and couldn't get it out of my head for the rest of the day."

"I SWAGGER TO MY BIKE LIKE I'M LIAM"

THE SONG I WISH I'D WRITTEN
'Supersonic' – Oasis

"To be a 14-year-old kid in central London when that came out was pretty special. Even though it was all about Manchester, it's about getting out of where you're from and becoming something. That song will stand the test of time."

THE SONG I WANT PLAYED AT MY FUNERAL
'Asleep' – The Smiths

"I have a really deep affection for The Smiths. Morrissey's lyrics with Johnny Marr's music is an incredible combination, though I have to be in a certain mood. I remember the scene in *This Is England '88* when Lol has taken an overdose and 'Asleep' starts playing. It's very sad and morbid and it fits perfectly."

THE SONG I LISTEN TO WHEN I'M TRAINING
'Fuckin' In The Bushes' – Oasis

"When I'm really on it I start training at 6am. I go in the gym, it's cold and dark, I put this song on and swagger over to my bike like I'm Liam Gallagher walking out onstage. At the BBC Sports Personality Of The Year last year they asked what I wanted played before my interview with Sue Barker, so I chose this. And I turned into Liam Gallagher then too."

THE SONG THAT REMINDS ME OF THE OLYMPICS
'Fools Gold' – The Stone Roses

"It's not the gold connection. When the Olympics was on, I was invited to the small gig The Stone Roses did at Village Underground in east London. I was stood, pissed out of my head, with Miles Kane, Paul Weller and Andy Crofts from The Moons, thinking 'I've arrived'. I met Jimmy Page and Mick Jones from The Clash too. It was a surreal night."

FREE EXHIBITION

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Radar

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NME NEW BAND OF THE WEEK

San Fermin

The big-idea Brooklynites who are fusing classical, jazz, pop and indie

When San Fermin bandleader Ellis Ludgwig-Leone was 16 and visiting London with his parents, he went into a record store and asked for a CD recommendation. The shop assistant pointed to Arctic Monkeys. A decade later, Alex Turner and Matt Helders say they're listening to his first single 'Sonsick' "on repeat". "It's totally surreal. It's not like we're the same genre, so it's even more exciting," says the Rhode Island-born artist.

Now 24, Ludwig-Leone doesn't have your average musical backstory. He studied classical composition at Yale and everything he's released up until now has been orchestral, including a ballet in August this year. But the swelling chamber-pop of his self-titled debut album is more akin to Sufjan Stevens than Bach, so why the switch?

"When I was trying to say things that required a more 'punch in the gut' response, I tended towards pop," he says. "The pop medium can be more immediate." Informed by teenage years in rock bands and listening to The Beatles and Talking Heads, he used 'Abbey Road' as a template for the album. In late 2011 he escaped the hubbub of Brooklyn for the Banff Centre For The Arts in Canada's Rocky Mountains. Sounds a bit like *The Shining*, but seclusion enabled him to write a song a day. And as he worked, two characters unfurled, in whom he explored his own "uncharted terrain" and themes of religion, nostalgia and family. A bit like therapy? "It honestly, totally was," he admits.

Aside from the *slight* hiccup of having $28,000 worth of equipment stolen while on tour in Portland recently ("We do not want the bad guys to win," says Ellis resolutely), things have been pretty peachy for San Fermin – a second album is already written, and 'Sonsick' feels ready for mass consumption. "I'd love to hit the mainstream," Ludwig-Leone confirms. "One of the things I've always thought about pop music is that the Top 40 is unnecessarily simplified. Listeners are usually a lot cleverer than that, and the response to 'Sonsick' supports that view. If something hits the listener hard, it doesn't have to be dumbed down at all, it can be interesting." ■ LUCY JONES

▼
ON NME.COM/NEWMUSIC NOW
▶ Hear the full stream of San Fermin's self-titled debut album

▶THE DETAILS

▶**BASED** Brooklyn
▶**FOR FANS OF** Sufjan Stevens, The National
▶**SOCIAL** sanferminband.com
▶**BUY IT NOW** 'Sonsick' and debut album 'San Fermin' are out now on Downtown
▶**SEE THEM LIVE** They tour the UK from November 7–11, with dates including Manchester, Glasgow and London
▶**BELIEVE IT OR NOT** Film producer Scott Rudin, a former employer of Ludwig-Leone, appeared to him in a dream and told him to make his album "creepy"

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MORE NEW MUSIC

Spies

Spies

With deep, swooping vocals that could easily replace Carson Cox's on records by Merchandise, Dublin's Spies put a grander, more atmospheric take on the Floridians' wiry sound. Frontman Michael Broderick adds a baritone elegance to the likes of 'November Sun', post-punk done in Interpol's overcast style. The five-piece's latest EP, 'Distant Shorelines' (released November 18), should see them continuing to carve out their own place among music's most glum.

▶SOCIAL @spiesdublin
▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/prescription-pr

Shy Nature

Appropriating the glossy pop of 'Serotonin'-era Mystery Jets, right down to singer William's Blaine Harrison-esque simper, Shy Nature write "songs about growing up". Though the likes of 'Washout' and 'Sinking Ship' are soft and tender, live they're much more raw.

▶SOCIAL @shynaturemusic
▶SEE THEM LIVE London Madame Jojo's (November 5)
▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/shynature

Radiator Hospital

Until recently a perfect paradise existed in west Philly: its name was Hazel House and it was home to the members of Waxahatchee and Swearin', and Sam Cook-Parrott of Radiator Hospital. The Crutchfield sisters and their bands have since moved out, but Sam remains, releasing frayed melodic pop-punk records as Radiator Hospital. His latest full-length, 'Something Wild', is one of Hazel House's last relics.

▶HEAR THEM radiatorhospital.bandcamp.com

Honours

London's Honours are reminiscent of The Killers back when they didn't hate each other. Though they've only just played their first-ever show at London's Hoxton Square Bar & Kitchen, from the expansive sound of debut track 'Ready To Run' it's clear they've got their sights set firmly on the mammoth stages of the arena circuit.

▶SOCIAL @honoursband
▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/honoursband

Sea Pinks

The solo project of former Girls Names drummer Neil Brogan, Sea Pinks began way back in 2010. Now he's left the post-punk group, he's gathered some friends to help build on his lo-fi foundations. First up is the 'Exploded View' EP – four tracks of understated, minimalist garage-pop like the Coral-esque 'An Exploded View' and defiant swirls of 'A Pretty Pass'.

▶SOCIAL facebook.com/seapinks
▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/cf-records

Weaves

With songs built out of singer Jasmyn Burke's iPhone voice memos, Toronto duo Weaves (bolstered to a four-piece for live shows) make dizzying, taut indie that recalls LA counterparts Warpaint on a fiercer, meaner streak. Latest track 'Take A Dip' has Burke urging, "*Come on, honey/Won't you take a dip in the sea*" as guitar hooks tie themselves in knots underneath. Seductive, sassy and whip-smart.

▶SOCIAL @Weeaves
▶HEAR THEM 'Take A Dip' is on YouTube

Louis M^ttrs

Wayward

The latest signing to Aesop, home of SOHN and Gent Mason, London-via-Leeds production duo Wayward are the latest in the line of British producers making UK dancefloors fun. With '90s-house piano stabs, falsetto and lyrics about "*keeping on trucking*", debut single 'Love Jones' is a slick-as-they-come club hit with its tongue firmly in cheek.

▶SOCIAL @waywarduk
▶SEE THEM DJ Nottingham Stealth (November 23), Bristol Thekla (29), Reading Sub89 (December 13)
▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/waywarduk

Ancient Times

Brighton-based Ancient Times are brimming with dreamy, nostalgic guitar-pop in their debut double A-side single 'Nightschool'/'Hieroglyphic', out now on Soft Power. Their greatest asset is singer George Smale's uncanny vocal resemblance to Morrissey – but there's a depth there that means they're more than pastiche.

▶SOCIAL facebook.com/pages/Ancient-Times
▶SEE THEM LIVE London 12 Bar Club (November 7)
▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/ancient-times

Merky Ace

Tinchy Stryder gave up his prince of grime crown years ago, and now Merky

BAND CRUSH

Only Real

Jackson Scott

"I saw Jackson Scott at Rough Trade West. I'd love to see him with a full band, 'cos he just played with an acoustic. I just love that song 'That Awful Sound'. The last time I felt like that about a guy was Mac DeMarco. It's like the next level of being a good song."

▶HEAR HIM soundcloud.com/jollyyjackk

WORDS: MATT WILKINSON, RHIAN DALY, DAVID RENSHAW, LAURA SNAPES, JAMES BALMONT, JOSEPH 'JP' PATTERSON PHOTOS: JENN FIVE

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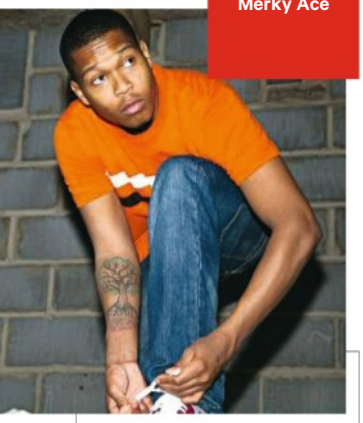

Merky Ace

Ace is trying to reclaim it. A No Hats No Hoods-signed, Boiler Room-approved MC who spits with rage, his 'Play Your Position' mixtape is essential listening.
▶**SOCIAL** @merkyace
▶**HEAR THEM** soundcloud.com/MerkyAce

Priests

What to love most about Washington DC's Priests, that's the question. Is it their caustic surf-punk in all its dark, swaggering glory? Singer Katie Alice Greer's revenge-driven lyrics about street harassment and revered anarchist playwright Lillian Hellman? Their decision to make "important music" and question their existence in commodified DC? Take your pick.
▶**SOCIAL** 666priests666.tumblr.com
▶**HEAR THEM** priests.bandcamp.com

Louis M^ttrs

He's already found himself playing the stages of Glastonbury, Reading and Leeds this summer, and now Brighton producer Louis M^ttrs is getting round to releasing some music. On his debut EP 'Beachy Head' (out now), he takes a darker approach to the womp-filled sounds of the club. "*Can you save me from myself?*" he asks on the record's highlight 'God's Help', a gloomy, glitchy piece of post-dubstep.
▶**SOCIAL** @louismttrs
▶**HEAR THEM**soundcloud.com/louismattrs

Babypink

Formed in April 2013, Babypink are the latest band to come off Birmingham's grungy production line. Cleaner and brighter than the city's second wave of acts, the quartet marry the pop nous of Swim Deep with the reverb-heavy riffs of Peace to make something that borders on anthemic. 'Petrichor' is pure Nirvana, from its quiet-loud dynamic to its squealing guitar hooks.
▶**SOCIAL** @babypinkband
▶**HEAR THEM**soundcloud.com/babypinkband

Trust Punks

New Zealand's finest new arid post-punkers are just rounding up their free singles series with 'Prone Hold', the best of the bunch, sounding somewhat like Deerhunter or demonic-period Liars if they were on classic NZ indie label Flying Nun. Next up is a five-song EP due before the year's out.
▶**SOCIAL** facebook.com/trustpunks
▶**HEAR THEM** trustpunks.bandcamp.com

More new music on page 24 ⟶

Radar LABEL OF THE WEEK

Arbutus

▶**FOUNDED** 2009 by Sebastian Cowan
▶**BASED** Montreal
▶**KEY RELEASES** **Grimes** – Oblivion (2011) **Sean Nicholas Savage** – Flamingo (2011) **Majical Cloudz** – Turns, Turns, Turns (2012)
▶**RADAR SAYS** After humble beginnings in the warehouses of Montreal, Arbutus found global fame in 2011 thanks to Grimes' 'Visions'. The record opened a door for the likes of Doldrums, Blue Hawaii and Tops to come through, and the label is going from strength to strength.

NEW SOUNDS FROM WAY OUT

Radar IN ASSOCIATION WITH MONSTER

This week's columnist
JAGWAR MA

LIFE ON MA

Jono Ma: I feel compelled to point some neon arrows towards **Jonti** as I seem to have trouble finding people in the UK who know of his music. Jonti is from Sydney, Australia. In 2011 he signed to the legendary Stones Throw label, home to leftfield hip-hop legends such as J-Dilla, Madlib and Peanut Butter Wolf. He's released two LPs already but has been lying relatively low. He was actually the keyboardist in a band I produced called Sherlock's Daughter, and we shared a fascination for oddball synthesizers and lo-fi samplers. He's a rare musician who continually makes music that completely bedazzles me. As a producer and musician I like to listen to modern music and try to deconstruct it – but with Jonti's music I have no idea how he's done it. It sounds like either savant-like wizardry dictated by chance, or endless, methodical hours, sculpting and crafting each atom, layer by layer. I know he has new releases lined up, so I'm keeping an ear out that hopefully he'll surface from his batcave/studio and make it to the UK soon so you can all see him in the flesh. Also, he's just completed a remix of one of our tracks – title to come – and word on the street is that he provided some production services on the alleged new Avalanches album. I'll pass you over to Gab now, who's gonna write about Au.Ra...

Jonti

Gab Winterfield: Just recently I went to an exhibition on Australian art at the Royal Academy in London. When we're interviewed we're often asked, "Why are so many psychedelic bands coming from Australia?" And to be honest, for a while I wasn't sure why. Is it cultural? Do we just like "trippy" music? Perhaps. But I feel like after seeing the exhibition the connection runs deeper. I don't think Aboriginal artist Rover Thomas was listening to The 13th Floor Elevators or Love, and yet his 'dreaming' paintings could be described as dreamlike psychedelic pop-art. It appears the colourful stream we all flow down may not be as shallow as previously thought. Which brings me to **Au.Ra** (above), now living in the UK with a few analogue synths, guitars with generous tremolo bars and an adventurous spirit. If you were to ask the awkward question to either of them to describe their sound, I'm guessing you wouldn't get much more than a bashful shrug. I'd say there are bits of post-psychedelia, shoegaze, dreampop and IDM all in there. I am very excited by them. Hope you dig too...

"Word on the street is that Jonti has worked on the new Avalanches"

Next week: Dave Sitek

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Jaakko Eino Kalevi

Having recently penned a deal with Weird World (Washed Out, Hookworms), Jaakko Eino Kalevi brings his Ariel Pink-influenced odd-pop to Britain from his native Finland later this month. Packed full of idiosyncratic arrangements, Kalevi strikes a unique chord on the bouncy, funk-infused 'No End', while 'Memories' was inspired by a classic episode of *The Ren & Stimpy Show*.

▶SOCIAL @jaakkoeino

▶SEE HIM LIVE Jaakko plays his first UK show at The Lexington in London on November 28

▶HEAR HIM 'No End' is at soundcloud.com/weirdworldrecordco

Ménage A Trois

Like fellow Mancunians Wu Lyf, Ménage A Trois cast an enigmatic shadow. They've also designed artwork for Wu offshoot Los Porcos. 'White Noise', from the 'Bogans Of Death' cassette released earlier this year, is their key track, with a bassline funkier than George Clinton jamming with Daft Punk.

▶SOCIAL bogansofdeath.tumblr.com

▶HEAR THEM 'Bogans Of Death' is at menage-a-trois.bandcamp.com/

Rosie Lowe

Rosie Lowe

Having worked on club-friendly tracks with Lil Silva, and currently penning solo material with Dave Okumu of The Invisible, it would be easy to peg Rosie Lowe as this year's answer to Jessie Ware. While there are similarities in their rich, late-night voices, Lowe operates on a darker, more atmospheric level. Her 'Right Thing' EP, due out on December 2, is packed full of drama, with haunted beats and sparse piano lines the order of the day.

▶SOCIAL @rosielowemusic

▶SEE HER LIVE Rosie headlines Birthdays in London on December 3

▶HEAR HER 'Me & Your Ghost' is at soundcloud.com/rosielowe

Sunboy

Clearly drinking from the same fountain as Tame Impala and Pond, US duo Sunboy take retro influences and drag them right up to date, making them another name to add to the list of bands currently worshipping all things psych. Only three songs are online so far but all of them are promising. 'Highway Screamin'' is the band's poppiest moment, complete with a huge chorus in which frontman LJ sings, "*I'll be alright, passing you by/I'll do just fine, bastards get by*".

▶SOCIAL @sunboy_tw

▶HEAR THEM soundcloud.com/sunboy_sc

US DUO SUNBOY CLEARLY WORSHIP ALL THINGS PSYCH

Ben Khan

Many of the comments under Ben Khan's songs on YouTube wonder whether he is really Jai Paul. He's not (though who *really* knows?) but you can see where the comparison comes from. The low-key electronic songwriter has crafted two of the year's most impressive tracks in the shape of 'Eden' and 'Drive (Part 1)', both of which pack muscle and slink in equal measure alongside a clear Prince influence.

▶SOCIAL @Ben__Khan

▶HEAR HIM soundcloud.com/benkhan

Fans

Fans' debut EP features some of the most immediate, ready-made fuzzy guitar anthems since The Vaccines packed out the back room of a pub in Camden before becoming arena-slaying indie titans. Their self-styled "dark pop noise" is best displayed on the Joy Division-gone-garage rock of 'Another Way'; and in the right (dim) light, 'Not In Love' could be mistaken for a scuzzier Interpol.

▶SOCIAL @thisisFANS

▶HEAR THEM fansband.bandcamp.com

TOM MARTIN

Radar NEWS ROUND UP

SUPERFOOD SIGN TO INFECTIOUS

After a year of playing their cards close to their chests, Birmingham's neo-grungers Superfood have signed to Infectious. The band's first physical release, the double A-side 'Bubbles'/'Melting', is out December 9. It's full of love and affection, according to singer Dom Ganderton.

ARTHUR BEATRICE WORK IT OUT

Arthur Beatrice have told *Radar* how relieved they are that their debut album 'Working Out' finally has a release date – February 3, 2014. Singer Ella Girardot says: "Hopefully it will mean as much to those who hear it as it does to us." The band play Bristol, Manchester and London in December.

Superfood

Wytches

THE WYTCHES SUPPORT METZ

Brighton grungers The Wytches will open up for Metz on their upcoming UK tour. "We toured with them earlier this year and got hammered all week," says singer Kristian Bell. "It'll be sweet to wrap up this crazy year with them." The gigs kick off in Manchester on November 22.

ILLLS PREP DEBUT

Oxford, Mississippi-based songwriter Steven Ross, the man behind gutsy grunge-rock outfit Illls, is gearing up to release his debut album. 'Hideout From The Feeders' – "about whether you prefer being alone or with other people, and which of those is more selfish", according to the frontman – is released on November 12 via Aloe Music.

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WorldMags.net

Reviews

THE DEFINITIVE VERDICT ■ EDITED BY TOM HOWARD

NME ALBUM OF THE WEEK

MIA
Matangi

Every track on MIA's comeback record chucks handfuls of sonic debris at you and is a reminder of what an important artist she is

A year ago, already 12 months into its elephantine gestation, MIA's record label rejected an early draft of 'Matangi' for sounding "too happy". Happy may be music biz-speak for "crap", but either way, after two drafts and a threat from the artist to leak it herself, the happiness problem is now cured. Instead, 'Matangi' is sparse, cold steel. Its biggest patch of hotness is the oldest thing here: 'Bad Girls', which when compared to the electronic ghosts that walk alongside it sounds full-blooded and just plain conventional. Second teaser 'Bring The Noize' is closer to the core of the album: a digital rat gnawing your face off as you lie slumped in a k-hole at a warehouse rave.

Whereas MIA's first album 'Arular' took on the idea of London-as-a-melting-pot in a brilliantly 21st century way, the follow-up, 'Kala', sought to take that vision global and her third, 'Maya', tried to lurk inside the wires connecting the globe. Her fourth doesn't offer an easy analogy to the way we live now. It's more concerned with inventing a new future, and uses producers plugged into the upper rungs of the charts: Britney collaborator Danja; The Partysquad (sort of a Dutch version of Swedish House Mafia); faithful sidekick Switch; The Weeknd and Drake collaborator Doc McKinney; and Hit-Boy, who made Kanye and Jay Z's 'Niggas In Paris', Kendrick Lamar's 'Backseat Freestyle' and A$AP Rocky's 'Goldie'. In doing so, MIA takes the basic template of right-now chart music and subverts it by forcing it to work triple time.

Beats are constantly morphing, and every track chucks handfuls of sonic debris at you, up to and including the sound of the volume on a Mac being turned down on 'Come Walk With Me'. 'aTENTtion'

ILLUSTRATION: JIMMY TURRELL

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confirms this tendency by replacing random syllables with the word "*tent*". Strapped to a beat culled from 'This Is Speed Garage '98', it's like Burial's ghost playing a hashtag game on Twitter with 'Yeezus'' bile duct: cold, metallic, alien and utterly addictive. So too is 'Warriors', which starts off down the straight and narrow, then veers wildly away into futurist trance-dance and clacking beats.

The abundance of sparkly fascinators on 'Matangi' might be related to over-thinking on its long road to release, but while on 'Maya' that sort of concept-heavy approach to innovation often ended in chainsaw samples and a headache, here the remorseless drill-synths have retreated, and its lonely beats'n'vocals core allows plenty of space to acclimatise. So much so that when she brings back the guitars by sampling The Weeknd's 'Lonely Star' on both 'Exodus' and 'Sexodus', its R&B psychodrama sounds more poignant than ever.

The opportunity for MIA to drop the ball with 'Matangi' was massive, and the three opening tracks are dicey enough to show how it could've gone wrong: the bit on the title track where she lists countries would be a great start to a *Flight Of The Conchords* parody. And after 'Maya''s misfires and 'Matangi''s descent into a Guns N' Roses and 'Chinese Democracy' type of saga, this could have been the record to bury Ms Arulpragasam as a cultural force. Instead, beyond the Superbowl hullabaloo, she's reminded us exactly why she's important: she's a hyper-intuitive artist with a mongrel sensibility who bows to no one. Found, in action.

8

■ GAVIN HAYNES

'MATANGI': LYRIC ANALYSIS

"Ain't Dalai Lama, ain't Sathya Baba/ My words are my armour and you're about to meet your karma" ('Karmageddon')

MIA takes on her adversaries. What with splitting with her baby-daddy, threatening to leak her album if Interscope didn't release it soon and the NFL confirming they're suing her over her Superbowl bird-flip, she's got a few.

"Brown girl, turn your shit down/Let you into Superbowl, you try to steal Madonna's crown" ('Boom Skit')

A reference to MIA's experiences in America after those Superbowl shenanigans.

"If you only live once why we keep doing the same shit?/Back home where I come from we keep being born/That's why they invented karma" ('YALA')

A dig at the acronym YOLO (you only live once). MIA prefers the more spiritual YALA (you always live again).

▶THE DETAILS

▶**RELEASE DATE** November 4 ▶**LABEL** XL ▶**PRODUCERS** MIA, Sugu, Doc McKinney, Switch, Hit-Boy, Danja, The Partysquad, Surkin ▶**LENGTH** 53:42 ▶**TRACKLISTING** ▶1. Karmageddon ▶2. Matangi ▶3. Only 1 U ▶4. Warriors ▶5. Come Walk With Me ▶6. aTENTion ▶7. Exodus ▶8. Bad Girls ▶9. Boom Skit ▶10. Double Bubble Trouble ▶11. YALA ▶12. Bring The Noize ▶13. Lights ▶14. Know It Ain't Right ▶15. Sexodus ▶**BEST TRACK** Warriors

MORE ALBUMS

Laurel Halo
Chance Of Rain Hyperdub

Thanks to a career that's meandered through synthpop, electronica and the odd bit of avant-garde techno, Michigan-born producer Laurel Halo has neatly avoided pigeonholing. Last year's vocal-heavy 'Quarantine' felt like a leap towards a fully formed sound, but now 'Chance Of Rain' arrives to throw another new configuration into her sonic flux. The meditative 'Ainnome' zips by with a cinematic chug that thumps deeper with every replay, and the off-kilter judder of 'Thrax' builds and falls like a dizzying hallucination caught inside a *Tetris* puzzle. Vocal-free, 'Chance Of Rain' sees Laurel Halo once more stepping back behind the sounds of her machines, but it's the depth of those sounds that speaks volumes. ■ ALEX HOBAN **7**

Midlake
Antiphon Bella Union

The opening songs of Midlake's fourth album provide hope that the Texans have moved out of the atonal dark ages they plundered on 2010's interminable 'The Courage Of Others' and into the modern day – or at least the 1960s, as evinced by the title track's gauche psychedelic organs and the swaggering bass of 'The Old And The Young'. But they swiftly slump back into portentous jams made for mourning failed crops, made worse by the ye olde farmhand Yoda-isms of Eric Pulido, now the band's singer following the departure of Tim Smith last year. "*I don't love anyone but me/I will go no further*" and "*Many before me saw the peril/ I ignored the error of my way*", he yawns, sounding as lifeless as his poor dead cornfields. ■ LAURA SNAPES **3**

Connan Mockasin
Caramel
The New Zealander's weird, hypnotic second will rock you into a trance

You've got to admire a guy willing to put out music that resembles Syd Barrett, Prince and Peter Green's Fleetwood Mac mashed up and played backwards. Connan Mockasin recorded his second album alone in a Tokyo hotel room, and it doesn't feature many songs as such. Instead it's 11 opportunities for the New Zealander to experiment with gloopy singing, sleepy guitar solos and Asian women chanting "*C-O-N-N-A-N*", then squeeze these noises into segments of hypnotic weirdness. Aside from lead single 'I'm The Man, That Will Find You' and rumbling closer 'I Wanna Roll With You', structure and choruses are ditched in favour of recreating the feelings that remain after those dreams where you can't hear what anyone's saying. Five of the tracks are called 'It's Your Body' and most of the lyrics are indecipherable. But allow 'Caramel' to ooze out and it'll rock you into an unsettling trance. ■ TOM HOWARD **7**

▶THE DETAILS

▶**RELEASE DATE** November 4 ▶**LABEL** Phantasy ▶**PRODUCER** Connan Mockasin ▶**LENGTH** 39:48 ▶**TRACKLISTING** ▶1. Nothing Lasts Forever ▶2. Caramel ▶3. I'm The Man, That Will Find You ▶4. Do I Make You Feel Shy ▶5. Why Are You Crying ▶6. It's Your Body 1 ▶7. It's Your Body 2 ▶8. It's Your Body 3 ▶9. It's Your Body 4 ▶10. It's Your Body 5 ▶11. I Wanna Roll With You ▶**BEST TRACK** I Wanna Roll With You

Young Knives
Sick Octave Gadzook

Going on the facts – fourth album, self-produced, self-released – you might presume 'Sick Octave' to be the last throw of a dice. If so, the post-punks have spun a double six. Uncool in a defiant way, the trio's oddball chumminess has hardened into something ever so slightly sinister. 'Owls Of Athens' glints with rudimentary electronics and sheet-metal drums, but Henry Dartnall's songs vibrate with a poppiness that gleams through the weirdness. Eccentricity occasionally gets the better of them – witness the overcooked bass solo on 'Green Island Red Raw' – but 'Maureen' finds them at their unnerving best, a study in obsession set to a melodic XTC bounce. ■ LOUIS PATTISON **8**

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Cut Copy
Free Your Mind
Modular

Cut Copy have flirted with pastiche in the past, tapping into '80s pop on their 2004 debut 'Bright Like Neon Love' and its follow-up, 2008's 'In Ghost Colours'. Latest album 'Free Your Mind' is no different, but this time the four Australians are channelling the acid house and Second Summer Of Love scenes of the late '80s. With the help of producer Dave Fridmann (a man whose cosmic touches can be heard on Tame Impala, MGMT and Flaming Lips records), they've created an impressive homage to the era with nods to A Guy Called Gerald and New Order on both the title track and 'We Are Explorers'. 'Meet Me In A House Of Love' and the 808 State bass-bouncing of 'Footsteps', meanwhile, sound fresh from the Haçienda. It's nothing new, but it is fun.

■ DAMIAN JONES **7**

Zoo Zero
Zoo Zero Crest Cont

London-based quartet Zoo Zero boast an impeccable set of influences: not only is their name taken from an obscure (and borderline unwatchable) Klaus Kinski movie, but their musical reference points include such august types as Can, Kraftwerk and Mission Of Burma. Thankfully this doesn't translate into something that aims over your head, and this debut relies more on brevity and brio than on ponderous passages of *vorsprung durch motorik*. The likes of 'Moon Communique' and 'Show Me Your Flag' are as visceral as they are cerebral, and the band's ear for melody is evident throughout.

■ BARRY NICOLSON **8**

Tinie Tempah
Demonstration

The rapper's second album is full of attitude, but too often slips into crude lyrics and clichéd production

Whether in interviews or on TV, Tinie Tempah seems like a genuinely likeable guy. On his 2010 debut, 'Disc-Overy', perhaps aware that he was a little bit too nice to convincingly bust out any thuggish rap moves, he parodied them with lines such as "*I got so many clothes I keep some in my aunt's house*", from 'Pass Out'. Yes, his lyrics were littered with references to Louis Vuitton and sexual conquests, but all in the spirit of a cheekily suggestive wink. The addictive, dance-influenced beats of 'Pass Out' and 'Miami 2 Ibiza' made Tinie's position clear: he was all about being a pop star.

Three years on, 'Disc-Overy' has sold over a million copies in the UK and Tinie is most definitely a star, second only to Dizzee Rascal on the UK scene, perhaps even above him following Dizzee's dismal 'The Fifth' album. So perhaps it's no surprise Tinie's brimming with confidence on record number two. On the Diplo-produced 'Trampoline' featuring 2 Chainz he flows like melting butter over booming bass detonations and tweaking electronics. 'Children Of The Sun' contrasts jittery digital fuzz and Tinie's spiky delivery with an anthemic chorus and a John Martin guest vocal. Meanwhile the sub bass, shuffling beat and soul diva sample on 'Witch Doctor' are a clever, off-kilter update of trip-hop. This is an album full of attitude.

That's also part of the problem though, particularly in the lyrics. "*Tryin' to get fellatio/ From girls as fresh as Daisy Lowe*", he raps on 'Don't Sell Out, while 'Mosh Pit' sees him "*Livin' kind of lavish/Fashion Week in London, Fashion Week in Paris/Every day I'm fucking someone different on my mattress*". All great fun for him, no doubt, but in the past he didn't trade in this lowest common denominator stuff. It's not just the lyrics, either. 'Mosh Pit' features men shouting "*hey*" in time to the beat, one of the biggest clichés in the production manual. It sums up the laziness this album slips into too often.

To be clear, the good outweighs the bad here, but Tinie has lost a lot of the charm that, when he turns it on, makes him so appealing. "*All I ever wanted to do was be individual*", he raps on 'Looking Down The Barrel'. Which is ironic, because he used to be refreshingly different. Now, not so much.

■ CHRIS COTTINGHAM **6**

▶THE DETAILS

▶**RELEASE DATE** November 4 ▶**LABEL** Disturbing London/Parlophone ▶**PRODUCERS** iSHi, Diplo, Labrinth ▶**LENGTH** 59:47 ▶**TRACKLISTING** ▶1. Someday (Place in the Sun) Feat. Ella Eyre) ▶2. Trampoline (Feat. 2 Chainz) ▶3. Don't Sell Out ▶4. It's OK (Feat. Labrinth) ▶5. Mosh Pit (Feat. Dizzee Rascal & Ty Dolla $ign) ▶6. Looking Down The Barrel ▶7. Children Of The Sun (Feat. John Martin) ▶8. Witch Doctor (Feat. Candice Pillay) ▶9. Shape (Feat. Big Sean) ▶10. Lover Not A Fighter (Feat. Labrinth) ▶11. A Heart Can Save The World (Feat. Emeli Sandé) ▶12. Tears Run Dry (Feat. Sway Clarke II) ▶13. Lost Ones (Feat. Paloma Faith) ▶14. Heroes (Feat. Laura Mvula) ▶**BONUS TRACK** Five Minutes ▶**BEST TRACK** Trampoline

Chase And Status
Brand New Machine
Virgin/EMI

Chase And Status, now on their third album, are often acclaimed as the new Prodigy for their noisy rave sound and ability to slay even the most heavy metal of festivals. But whereas The Prodigy's third album 'The Fat Of The Land' saw them conquer the globe with a pioneering mix of punk, hardcore and, er, Crispian Mills from Kula Shaker, 'Brand New Machine' sees Chase And Status retreat into dance music history. It's not so much the promised "nod to the '90s rave era" as a photocopy, from 'Blk & Blu"s two-step tribute to 'Count On Me"s piano riff. The result is well produced and enjoyable, but it would be nice to see personality and innovation – two things The Prodigy rarely lacked – emerge among the Altern-8 tributes.

■ BEN CARDEW **6**

White Denim
Corsicana Lemonade
Downtown

A brainier and more refined take on these Austin rockers' Unknown Mortal Orchestra-meets-Thin Lizzy sound, White Denim's sixth album should, by rights, see them do for psych rock what The Black Keys did for blues rock. Tracks such as 'New Blue Feeling' give the songwriting a classic feel, the likes of 'Come Back' add funk to the mix (and fall on the correct side of the invisible barrier between Free and Lenny Kravitz), and throughout the album there are squealing fuzz guitar solos that verge on free jazz. The biggest star is, perhaps, the production, built for chunky headphones and FM radios. You'll find yourself hankering for a pair of flares after listening – in white denim, of course.

■ DAN STUBBS **8**

Reviews

RAC
Don't Talk To EP Interscope

Remixer Andre Allen Anjos is the brains behind 'Don't Talk To', and he provides the synthy thread running between these four songs – but the disparity of the vocalists singing on each track muddles this EP. Bloc Party's Kele Okereke and one-time Mark Ronson collaborator MNDR head up 'Let Go', a song that robs the bassline from The Clash's 'Train In Vain' and pits the vocalists against each other, resulting in Okereke earnestly emoting while MNDR chirpily tells him to "*give it up*". Elsewhere Penguin Prison features on the party pop of 'Hollywood' which resembles a lost Phoenix song. And Colorado singer Katie Herzig's coo on 'We Belong' offsets the spiralling keyboards in a Vodafone advert kind of way. That's not a compliment.

■ LISA WRIGHT **5**

Papa
Tender Madness
Universal/Island

A few months ago, one half of LA duo Papa, Darren Weiss, denounced the idea of being a rock star and said he'd rather be a librarian: "I believe in dedicating my life to being an artist," he said. The former Girls drummer seems sincere, and his devotion to the cause is in every impassioned beat, Springsteen-inspired lyric and wild piano chord on 'Tender Madness" standout tracks: 'Put Me To Work', 'I Am The Lion King' and 'Young Rut'. Over the course of this debut album, however, the schtick begins to wear thin. And when the songs descend into repetitive strummed choruses and tired imagery ("*Ain't it so good to be young in America and watch the world burn*", on 'If The Moon Rises') you realise a bit of rock-star pomp could've livened things up a little.

■ EVE BARLOW **6**

Jon Hopkins
How I Live Now OST
Just Music

Kevin Macdonald's film *How I Live Now* is about the countryside, teenage love and the onset of nuclear war, and demands music that's innocent and wondrous yet full of foreboding. Jon Hopkins – an experienced soundtrack composer who's riding high after the summer release of his celebrated solo album 'Immunity' – achieves that combination. Clean, sparkling piano chords hover above swamps of electronic noise, making for a score that has real value as a standalone album. To help it work, some songs from the film are not included (although Amanda Palmer's 'Do It With A Rockstar' is) and there's a luscious finish with 'Garden's Heart' – his collaboration with Bat For Lashes. An excellent end to Hopkins' stellar year.

■ PHIL HEBBLETHWAITE **8**

Sore Eros & Kurt Vile
Jamaica Plain
Care In The Community

There comes a point in every stoned musician's longest bong session when the idea of releasing an ambient folk EP full of birdsong, drones and repetitive tone-poems that were recorded 10 years ago sounds like a good idea. If anyone could pull this off it's Kurt Vile, who created this three-track EP of largely instrumental soundscapes alongside Robert Robinson of Connecticut's Sore Eros in the early 2000s. But 'Jamaica Plain' is inessential stuff. The title track is the sound of an acoustic guitar setting off from Honolulu on a solo drift across the Pacific, 'Serum' a lethargic Spiritualized interlude set to crooked synths and chugs, and 'Calling Out Of Work' the sound of Vile tuning up in an ambient aviary. Pointless.

■ MARK BEAUMONT **4**

GUY EPPEL

30

Swearin' Surfing Strange

Philadelphian DIY rockers strike the perfect balance between fragile melodies and tornadoes of noise

Swearin' frontwoman Allison Crutchfield used to be a member of the bands The Ackleys and PS Eliot with her twin, Katie. When PS Eliot split in 2011, the sisters went their separate musical ways. Katie formed lo-fi solo project Waxahatchee, and her second album 'Cerulean Salt' is one of this year's most intimate. Allison formed the rowdier and fuzzier Swearin' with guitarist and co-vocalist Kyle Gilbride, drummer Jeff Bolt and bassist Keith Spencer (who's also in Waxahatchee), and their excellent self-titled debut came out last year to very little fuss.

The same won't happen with 'Surfing Strange'. The songs are beefed up on an album that was recorded in the basement of the Philadelphia house Crutchfield was sharing with her bandmates and sister, and they maintain the almost twee spark that made Swearin' lovable in the first place. Cutesy they can be, but the only thing that's wet about them is the sporadic water theme running through the album: in its title; in the moment 'Watered Down' opens with the line "*I was getting wet*"; in the drums crashing like waves on 'Mermaid'.

Instead Swearin' are a powerful force with an ability to switch between soft and hard in a similar way to '90s alt.rock heroes The Breeders. They know exactly when to strip things back, as on the fragile 'Loretta's Flowers'; and they know exactly when to ramp things up into mini tornados of noise, as they do on the clattering peaks of 'Echo Locate'. On 'Melanoma', which begins tenderly with just Gilbride and his guitar, they know exactly when to introduce a fuzz storm and smother the track with gloom; and on 'Young', Crutchfield comes in at precisely the right moment to sweeten the song's buzzsaw guitar by promising to "*follow you anywhere*".

The interaction between Crutchfield and Gilbride makes the album fizz, most notably on the slacker rock of 'Unwanted Place' where they spar with each other's jagged riffs and searing solos. It's then that the calmer, Pavement-like 'Curdled' brings the album to a sleepy end, as if the emotional power of the 10 tracks before it has zapped the band's energy. It's a calm finale to a record that's full of energy, zeal and ideas.

■ RHIAN DALY **8**

▶THE DETAILS

▶**RELEASE DATE** November 4 ▶**LABEL** Wichita ▶**PRODUCER** Swearin' ▶**LENGTH** 33:58 ▶**TRACKLISTING** ▶1. Dust In The Gold Sack ▶2. Watered Down ▶3. Mermaid ▶4. Parts Of Speech ▶5. Melanoma ▶6. Echo Locate ▶7. Loretta's Flowers ▶8. Glare Of The Sun ▶9. Unwanted Place ▶10. Young ▶11. Curdled ▶**BEST TRACK** Unwanted Place

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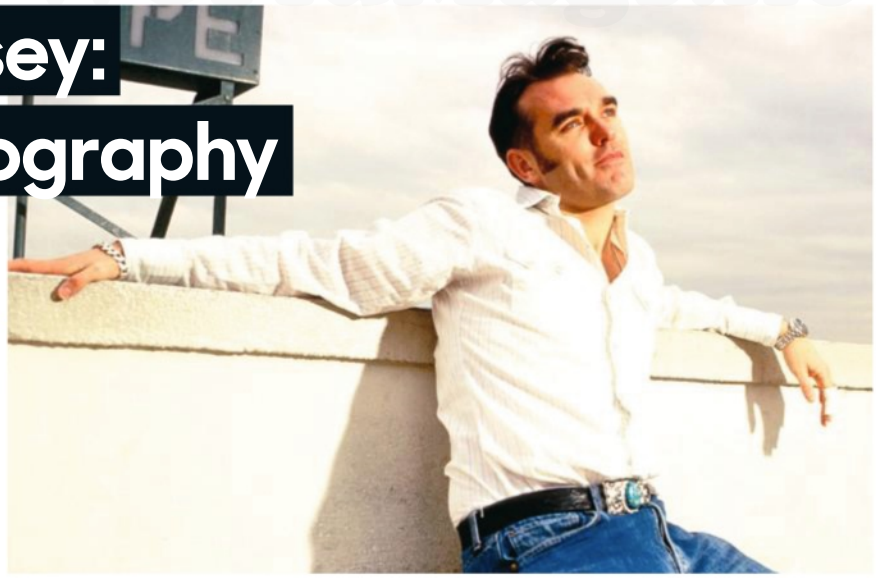
BOOK

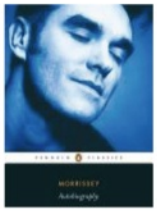
Morrissey: Autobiography



Self-justifying and cantankerous – would you want it any other way?

That it is published by Penguin Classics is terribly Moz. Recall how on returning to music after seven years' absence with 2004's 'You Are The Quarry', he determined that new label Sanctuary should revive for him the long-defunct reggae imprint Attack. The purpose then was twofold: a petulant flick of the quiff at those who'd painted him as Union Jack-waving Little Englander; and the move of a creative giant deserving of a bit of the red carpet treatment. So you'll find *Autobiography* tucked alongside Mozart, Marx and Malcolm X. It's a joke – and a good one. But deadly serious, too.

You could say the same about the content. *Autobiography* is equal parts raw sensitivity, tart witticisms and grudge-filled axe grinding. Morrissey, while rather grandiloquent, can certainly write, and at its evocative best – which includes most of the first 100 pages – *Autobiography* is as lyrical as any Smiths record. You can smell the smog as Morrissey relates stories of his childhood in Stretford on the perimeter of Manchester, a place of constant downpour, slow decline and death, death, endless death. School is a misery, its bitter tutors later immortalised as the "*belligerent ghouls*" in 'The Headmaster Ritual'. Girls flock to Morrissey, but are barely a distraction ("a mangled jungle of tangled hair... honeypots sprawled like open graves"). Culture is his salvation: *Coronation Street* (to whom the young Moz unsuccessfully pitched scripts), the poems of Betjeman and Housman and, of course, music. Mott The Hoople, David Bowie and the New York Dolls were all the stuff of teenage epiphany for him.



▶RELEASE DATE
Out now
▶PUBLISHER
Penguin Classics

The Smiths get short shrift. Morrissey is complimentary but unsentimental about his bandmates (Johnny Marr is "unnaturally gifted" and "we get on very well"). In comparison, Rough Trade – the label that made Morrissey a star – gets sustained, probably unwelcome attention. The label is a "vinegary spinster" and MD Geoff Travis a "lugubrious historian", tampering in creative moments but distant when called upon to loosen the purse strings.

This can be entertaining, but such a tone takes root. The making of The Smiths' finest LP, 'The Queen Is Dead', zips by in a flash, as Morrissey is sidetracked to take potshots at *Melody Maker*, Tony Wilson and anyone else seen as standing in the way of The Smiths' god-given ascent. Only contract lawyers will delight in the lengthy description of the 1989 court case that saw bassist Andy Rourke and drummer Mike Joyce sue for a greater share of Smiths profits, and his 2011 legal suit against *NME* is also given a thorough picking over. Still, this is the warts-and-all memoir that was hoped for, and even though Moz can be bitter, self-justifying and cantankerous, would you want it any other way? Given that his music career seems to be on hold, perhaps a life behind the typewriter beckons. *Coronation Street*, you suspect, would accept a script or two. ■ LOUIS PATTISON

8

Melvins
Tres Cabrones Ipecac

Toasting 30 years of surliness this year, the line-up of Pacific Northwestern sludge-rock absurdists the Melvins has rarely been fixed: if it's founder member Buzz Osborne plus two grannies on drums, the Melvins it remains. The hook for 'Tres Cabrones' is the return of Mike Dillard, the band's drummer in their embryonic teenage days who later backed Kurt Cobain in pre-Nirvana band Fecal Matter. The initial feeling that this album is destined to be one of their many jokey, disposable ventures dissipates slightly as Osborne's near-peerless ability with a brain-alteringly great riff takes hold ('Stump Farmer' and 'Walter's Lips' excel here). Still, the Melvins have made so many better albums that it would be scandalous to recommend this one. ■ NOEL GARDNER

6

The Growlers
Not.Psych! FatCat

If a crate-digging mate played you The Growlers' latest EP and said it was the work of a long-lost gang of groovy longhairs from Topanga Canyon in California circa 1969, you'd be forgiven for being fooled. Orange County's flashback freaks may be stuck in the past, but the seven-song 'Not.Psych!' comes spiralling out of the same timewarp as Tame Impala – the swaying 'Tell It How It Is' is more red wine than shrooms, and 'Change In Your Veins' is a perfect example of garage-slanted commune pop. 'Humdrum Blues' lets the side down with dated stereotypes about a lady desperate for "*a ring on her pretty little hand*" but the hazy shake of 'Nobody Owns You' is so authentic you can almost smell the patchouli oil. The hippies done good. ■ LEONIE COOPER

7

PLAY IT AGAIN

RECENTLY RATED IN NME

Arcade Fire
Reflektor
"The Montreal band have abandoned rock'n'roll and written a dance record, one that's shot through with famous bits of pop music: the 'Billie Jean' bassline, Prince's falsetto, the honk of 'Sound And Vision' saxophones." (NME, October 26) **8**

Future Of The Left
How To Stop Your Brain In An Accident
"Direct and heavy as hell, it's a serious album for serious rock fans. Not since 2007's debut 'Curses' have the Cardiff rockers sounded this thrilling." (NME, October 19) **8**

Paul McCartney
New
"Avoids becoming another thumbs-akimbo entry into the Groovy Uncle Paul canon; instead, it's his most enjoyable record in years. The sound of an old dog having fun with some old tricks." (NME, October 12) **7**

MØ
Bikini Daze EP
"The Diplo collaboration 'XXX 88' is even snappier than its title, and 'Dark Night' is full of brilliant and ridiculous brass hooks." (NME, October 26) **8**

Gesaffelstein
Aleph
"After producing 'Black Skinhead' and 'Send It Up' on Kanye West's 'Yeezus', French producer Gesaffelstein suddenly finds his industrial techno sound isn't only of interest to people who frequent Parisian raves." (NME, October 26) **8**

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Wet Nuns

The duo's last ever show ends fittingly: on a sea of hometown hands

Tonight is both a homecoming and a swansong. Singer and guitarist Rob Graham and drummer Alexis Gotts are calling it a day because, according to a statement they put out, they "can't stand the sight of each other". A joke, probably. The occasion, though, is almost overshadowed by the presence of local hero Alex Turner. A group of girls squeal so loudly about the Arctic Monkey you can almost hear their ovaries rattling in their windpipes. But as Wet Nuns stomp through their squalid blues, they soon regain the crowd's attention. Alexis and Rob don't interact much for recent single 'Hanging', or the gnarly riff of 'All The Young Girls'. But as the moshpit thrashes for the band's final number 'Throttle', they bid farewell to their fans by surfing the room atop a sea of hands. ■ HAYLEY AVRON

8

Queens Social Club

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Sheffield

Oct 19

ANDY FORD

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Arctic Monkeys

Phones 4u Arena, Manchester
Wednesday, October 23

It's impossible not to be seduced by the brilliance of the 'AM' tracks and Alex Turner's showmanship

It seems to slither out from underneath a rock, its beady obsidian eyes unnervingly calm and conniving: you're in its sights. "*Have you got colour in your cheeks?*" wonders Alex Turner with the predatory inquisitiveness of a man who's got half a mind to drain it right out of them. The 10,000 or so people inside Manchester's cumbersomely named Phones 4u Arena seem more than happy for him to do just that – as 'Do I Wanna Know?' begins to fill this most chasmic of rooms, I hear the bloke behind us remark to his mate that "they could shag absolutely anyone in here, you know. Including me."

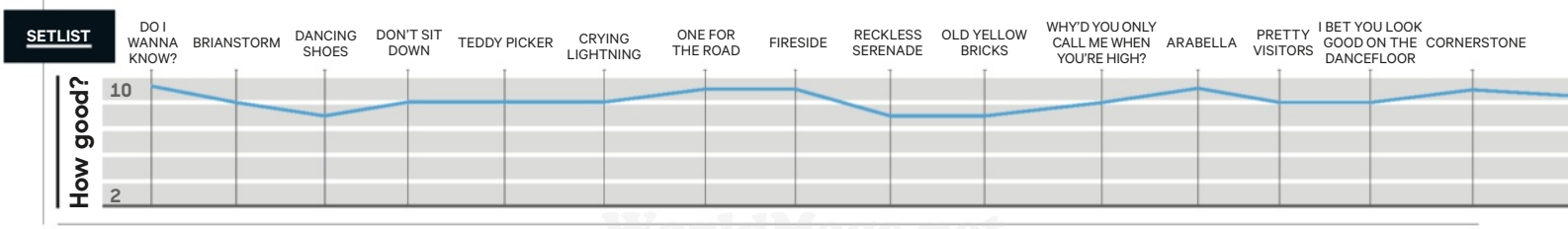
THERE'S SOMETHING COMPELLING ABOUT WATCHING A BAND OF THIS SIZE GET BETTER AND BETTER, INSTEAD OF WORSE AND WORSE

And to think there was ever a time when this band's ability to make the leap from clubs to arenas was in doubt. Arctic Monkeys are old hands at this business now, and they've not even hit their thirties. For most groups a tour like this might represent the zenith of their careers; for the Monkeys, five albums in, it's feasible that they're still only at the foothills of a nosebleed-inducing incline to come. Sometimes you wonder if the band themselves don't find their serial flouting of Newton's law about what becomes of things that go up a little boring – if you've never known the troughs, after all, how do you expect to recognise the peaks? – but for the rest of us there's something compelling about watching a band of this size get better and better, instead of worse and worse.

As if to underline that, tonight's show skews heavily (and confidently) towards 'AM', with all but three of the album's 12 tracks getting played. This means that something inevitably has to make way, and some pretty big tunes – 'When The Sun Goes Down', 'A Certain Romance' and 'Still Take You Home' being perhaps the most notable – don't make the cut. What's strange, however, is that of all the songs they could've played, it's one of the few new ones they don't – 'Knee Socks' – that feels most conspicuous by its absence. They wheel out 'I Bet You Look Good On The Dancefloor' – there'd be riots if they didn't – but placed next to the sexier, more sophisticated likes of 'One For The Road' or 'Arabella', you begin to understand why the Monkeys often seem to wince at those old songs like memories of bad adolescent haircuts. They're barely the same band any more, and as great as that debut album is, it would be an utter waste for them to renege on everything they've achieved by making 'Whatever People Say We Are... That's What We'll Be'.

That's not to say they don't care about entertaining us; quite the opposite, in fact. Alex Turner may have dialled down the Elvis affectations since Glastonbury (although you still detect the occasional twang, like when he purrs about how "you and I are going to get on just fine, Manchester") but his evolution into a proper frontman – that is to say, not

ED MILES



just the singer in a band – continues apace. It's most evident on the songs where he puts down his guitar – like on 'Fireside', where the presence of former Coral guitarist Bill Ryder-Jones frees up his limbs for a display of shape-throwing and rakish finger-clicking – and while it's all very arch and knowing, it's also far more fun to watch than the surly, uncommunicative youth of old. People talk about the influence LA has had on them, but Turner's act is pure Vegas; all he needs is a tumbler of scotch and a few one-liners about his ex-wife.

If you find such studied insincerity a little off-putting, however, relax – it's never prominent enough to overshadow the songs themselves, and while there are a few eyebrow-raising omissions tonight, they're not exactly reaching for the deep cuts. We still get 'Brianstorm', we still get 'Fluorescent Adolescent' and, yes, we still get 'Mardy Bum', whose presence placates even the most diehard opponents of the Monkeys' determination to move on from those first two records. They aren't the moments we'll remember from this gig though – those would be the blizzard of ticker-tape that descends during 'I Wanna Be Yours', 'One For The Road''s madcap reinvention of Nick O'Malley and Matt Helders as slinky R&B vocalists, and the mass euphoria that greets 'R U Mine?'. The Monkeys' powers of persuasion are without equal; try as you might, you just can't help but be seduced. ■ BARRY NICOLSON

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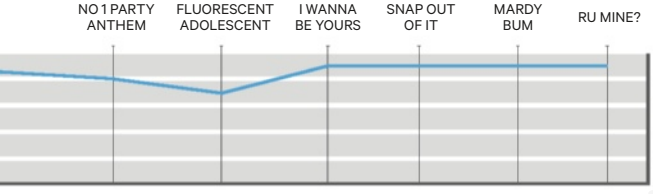


THE VIEW FROM THE CROWD

Craig O'Keefe, 28, Burnley
"Fucking brilliant. I've been waiting about five years to see them – I missed them in Barcelona a few years ago because of a mix-up with the tickets, so it was great to finally see them. Amazing band."

Francesca Shack, 22, Burnley
"I well enjoyed it – it was one of the best gigs I've seen. I'm maybe a bigger fan of the older songs – aren't we all? – but the new album's not long out, and I'm definitely warming up to it. The gig was brilliant though."

Jake Lyons, 19, Manchester
"The new one is 100 per cent my favourite out of all five of their albums, so I was really happy with the setlist tonight – they played eight or nine new songs, and they sounded great. I proper loved it."

Naomi Rutherfurd, 27, Lancaster
"It was the first time I've ever seen them, and it was absolutely amazing – by far one of the best concerts I've ever been to. The new songs sound amazing – the new album is the best thing they've ever done, definitely better than the first."

MORE GIGS

Holograms
Soup Kitchen, Manchester
Tuesday, October 22

Holograms are always pleasingly difficult to listen to, with their murky Joy Division bass rumbles, metallic Iceage guitars and insular lyrics about isolation and destruction. But tonight they're more austere than usual because of technical glitches, and they glare from the stage with added bile. It takes a couple of songs for the band to realise frontman Andreas Lagerström's mic isn't on, then he leaves after the next one to find a guitar backstage. After 10 minutes he returns, but it feels like the passion has gone, and the rage that lives inside songs such as 'ABC City' and 'Meditations' feels less shared by, and more directed at the crowd. They respond by clapping meekly through the feedback. ■ SIMON BUTCHER

4

London Grammar
Electric Brixton, London
Friday, October 18

Live, there's a playful side to this fresh-faced trio that doesn't come through on debut album 'If You Wait'. At one point singer Hannah Reid jokes that it's great playing in Britain again because recent US crowds kept distracting her by "randomly cheering during the quiet bits". And there are a lot of quiet bits in their 50-minute set of sombre post-xx indie-pop. But there are also some rousing trip-hop climaxes on 'Metal & Dust' and their cover of Kavinsky's 'Nightcall', an audience singalong to 'Strong', and moments when Reid's voice sounds big enough to appear on a Disclosure banger. London Grammar are already an endearing live band, but with greater confidence will come greater powers. ■ NICK LEVINE

7

Courtney Barnett

Notting Hill Arts Club, London
Tuesday, October 22

The UK debut from this new storytelling talent from Melbourne is full of hopeless charm

It's only a matter of time before Courtney Barnett's wry and clever songs reach a vast audience, and the 40 or so people here tonight are all earning bragging rights for seeing this Australian songwriter perform her first-ever UK gig. It's actually the first of three shows she's playing this week – not that she's advertising them strongly. She doesn't mention them, or the fact that she usually plays with a band called The Courtney Barnetts. Such is her slightly hopeless charm. The character in her songs – full of amusing, dead-end scenarios and panic attacks brought on by gardening – is very much what's on show tonight. She's honest and ordinary in the best possible way, and clearly gobsmacked to be playing in London. This trip, which included a show in New York last week, is her first time abroad. Third on the bill, she performs a short set – five tracks from her 'A Sea Of Split Peas' double EP and a request from a friend in the audience called 'Depreston', which is about house-hunting in a grotty suburb of Melbourne. Playing with just an electric guitar brings out the blues in her songs, which she allows to breathe by slowing them down. "Wow, thank you, I haven't even played it yet," she says after applause greets her announcement that tonight's final song will be her best, 'Avant Gardener'. It's already a classic, and the most concrete proof yet that Barnett is a spectacular new songwriting talent. ■ PHIL HEBBLETHWAITE

8

SETLIST

- Canned Tomatoes (Whole)
- Scotty Says
- Depreston
- Out Of The Woodwork
- History Eraser
- Avant Gardener

JORDAN HUGHES

NME GIG OF THE WEEK

Sŵn Festival

Various venues, Cardiff
Thursday, October 17 – Sunday, October 20

Four days of inspirational new music and community spirit at the ever-evolving city-centre event

I first heard of Sŵn in 2009, when the Cardiff-based festival begged volunteers to make lengths of pink bunting to decorate event spaces. Walking into Clwb Ifor Bach on the opening Thursday of Sŵn 2013, the ceilings are strung with professionally made bunting. The brick stairwell smells freshly painted. You can check the schedule on a fancy phone app. The all-new Sŵn Radio has set up in the window of Urban Outfitters, and has been broadcasting since Monday, thanks to the investment of Arts Council Wales.

Huw Stephens and John Rostron started Sŵn in 2007 following an inspirational trip to SXSW. These days Huw needs no introduction and John is head of the Welsh Music Foundation, and while branding and expansion muddy SXSW's aims, Sŵn has grown and professionalised without losing its brilliant community spirit. It's one of the best British festivals for making genuine discoveries and challenging preconceptions.

Take **Radstewart**, playing downstairs at Clwb for Wichita's Thursday showcase. Their name, their baggy sweater vests and gangly, dangling arms scream irony. But it's all a disguise to deflect from the cleverness of their songs – something like Pavement, Parquet Courts and Art Brut, or The Fall as shambling college rockers. The best song is about enduring shit parties, where conversational singer Jac slips in the apt observation, "*If you go out wearing a Native American headdress, you're a cunt*". Sŵn stalwarts (they played the first one) **Sky Larkin** close the showcase with a squally, heartwarming set. They're perennial DIY underdogs despite just releasing a third great album in a row, but rightful returning heroes at a festival like this.

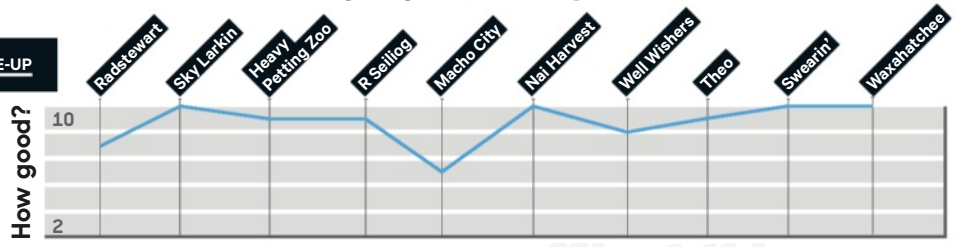
Friday is equally provocative, and Swansea's **Heavy Petting Zoo** annihilate the same room. Onstage Ben, Billy and Joe play vicious, precise hardcore while singer Amy Zachariah toes the knife-edge between sexual desire and threat taking place in beds and on streets. Their dancer Jon wears a white shirt and creepers, like someone playing as one of Duran Duran. He convulses as though he learned how to move from a chewed VHS of 'Thriller', mouthing Amy's words the whole time. He's the focal point rather than the band, who

IT'S ONE OF THE BEST BRITISH FESTIVALS FOR MAKING GENUINE DISCOVERIES

appear conscious of what Speedy Ortiz's Sadie Dupuis calls "the Gwen Stefani-ification" of female frontpeople.

Saturday evening is Sŵn at its best: **R Seiliog**'s shrill motorik rumble feels comically out of place upstairs at the huge branch of O'Neills, a chain pub on the high street. At the opposite end of the venue scale is Jacobs Market, a six-floor antiques bazaar with a sleek arts space at the top, where one of Truckers Of Husk's new band, **Macho City**, fizzes away like a spangled Fuck Buttons. Over at daggy rock bar Fuel, Barely Regal's showcase kicks off with **Nai Harvest**, an incredible Sheffield duo who bawl about fear like an emo Japandroids. Singer Ben Thompson convinces us to stay for **Well Wishers**, and it's a great decision: the four hirsute Manchester men break from their noisy punk set to read from a copy of *That's Life* magazine before playing Weezer covers for the rest of their set. By this point, Barely Regal seem like saviours, so we stay for **Theo**, who's more an athlete than

LINE-UP



a musician; constructing mountainous post-rock by himself, switching between a looping pedal that allows his guitar lines to crash and burn rather than just build endlessly and a well-battered drum kit.

Sunday is proof that a four-day festival in a city with a single street dedicated to chippies requires either hard training or extreme self-restraint. Fortunately, Sŵn's closing acts are **Swearin'**, whose perfect pop-punk is worth saving a last burst of energy for, and **Waxahatchee**. Katie Crutchfield's songs are no strangers to hungover self-loathing and introspection, and offer ample chance to slump by a wall and get sentimental about this inspiring festival. ■

LAURA SNAPES

10

DANIEL MACKIE, RICHARD JOHNSON

Rudimental
O2 Academy Brixton, London
Thursday, October 18

"We've travelled the world this year," screams Rudimental's DJ Locksmith. "But it feels good to be HOME!" World-beating pop act the quartet may be, but tonight they don't quite have the measure of a packed-out Brixton Academy. The gigantic 'Waiting All Night' is a joyous event, but the dub and soul tracks such as 'Home' struggle to compete with the furore. It's a shame, because these are the songs that really showcase the MOBO winners' musicianship and rich sense of ragga tradition. But a hit is a hit, and as the act's very Soul II Soul-style positivity meets EDM on 'Feel The Love' the world is beaten anew.

■ JOHN CALVERT

6

The Preatures
Madame JoJo's, London
Tuesday, October 22

After a hype-winning stint at CMJ two weeks ago, tonight's debut UK gig for Sydney's The Preatures comes packed with heaps of buzz. Disappointment immediately looms large as their set begins with average cuts of funk rock. But then the band's Joan Jett-style frontwoman Izzi Manfredi whips her mic out of its stand, chucks water over herself and brings the set to life over the Led Zeppelin riffs of 'Better Than It Ever Could Be'. The opening clicks of 'Is This How You Feel?' are greeted with cheers, and the night ends with a breathless cover of '(I'm) Stranded', a classic punk song by fellow Australian band The Saints. The Ramones-y finale makes up for the stodgy start.

■ RHIAN DALY

7

Wolf Alice

Moles, Bath
Tuesday, October 22

The Londoners ooze confidence throughout their set of playful grunge

You can tell a lot about a band by the way they cope in a crisis. Tonight the opening riff of Wolf Alice's set-closer and biggest track 'Fluffy' falls apart when guitarist Joff Oddie loses some strings. Six months ago, the same thing happened at a show at The Lexington in London and the band didn't recover, but the Wolf Alice onstage in Bath is a different beast. "That was a classic 'mare," laughs drummer Joel Amey. "Just fucking play the song!" So rather than stop the show, Oddie uses the tools he has to hand and yells his riff a cappella while the strings get fixed. It's a ridiculous and brilliant end to a set that's full of carefree and youthful fun from beginning to end.

SETLIST

- ▶Moaning Lisa's Smile
- ▶Your Love's Whore
- ▶Leaving You
- ▶Baby Ain't Made Of China
- ▶Bros
- ▶Lighters
- ▶Lisbon
- ▶Blush
- ▶90 Mile Beach
- ▶You're A Germ
- ▶She
- ▶White Leather
- ▶Fluffy

It's in the way the quartet (completed by singer Ellie Rowsell and bassist Theo Ellis) interact onstage, and casually chat to each other and the audience about where to get drunk and which crowd member has the best outfit. And it's in the way the Londoners are slowly carving out a niche for themselves with every bit of music they release. Early songs like 'Leaving You' set up Wolf Alice as a reined-in band full of lilting guitar lines and softly-softly vocals. But time has shown that they are anything but cautious, and actually tap into a more playful form of grunge with songs like 'Baby Ain't Made Of China' (soft intro, massive and squalling guitar drop) and 'Lisbon' (which gets everyone dancing). They use the quiet-loud-quiet trick to righteous effect.

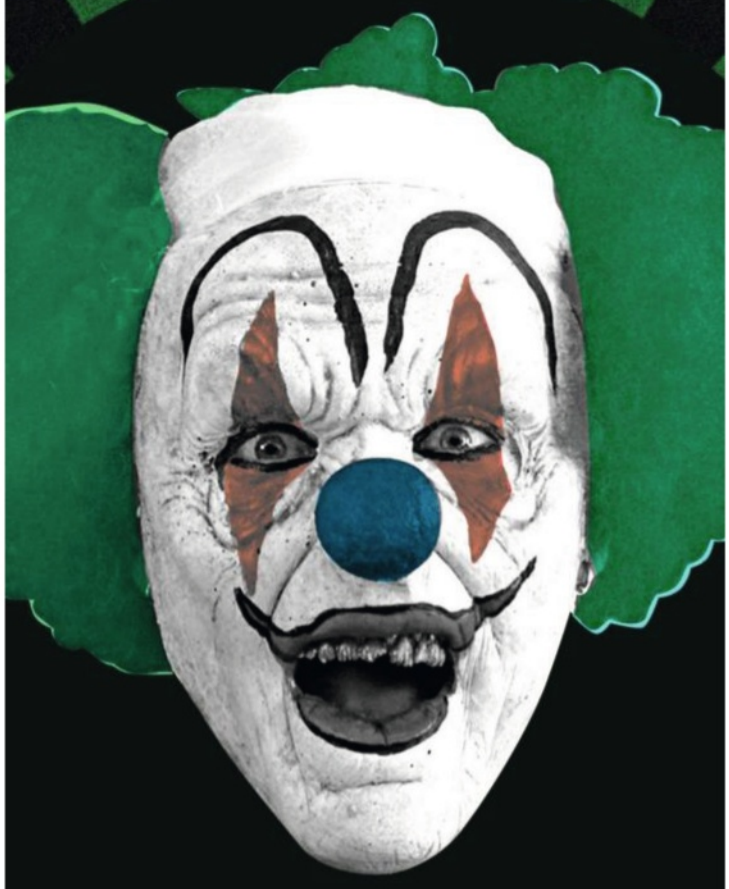
Onstage the band wear their influences on their sleeves – mostly denim and leopard print – and frontwoman Rowsell resembles a punk kid who wants to be in the Spice Girls or All Saints. Their music, like their clothes, takes bits of the '90s and adds a little extra bite. '90 Mile Beach' from recent EP 'Blush' is beefed up by Ellis and Oddie's guitars, while the air-punching teenage chants of 'You're A Germ' and the tight riffs of 'She' suggest the band's best work is yet to come. Then come the sweet strains of 'White Leather', before Oddie's string breaks during 'Fluffy'. The confidence they exude as Oddie bawls out his guitar line is telling: this is a band at ease with their look and sound. ■ LISA WRIGHT

8

RICHARD JOHNSON

THE HALLOWEEN BALL

CLUB NME



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Frankie & The Heartstrings

It's been a busy 2013 for Frankie & The Heartstrings. They released second album 'The Days Run Away', opened a record shop in Sunderland called Pop Recs Ltd and will end the year with a tour. Drummer Dave Harper gives us the lowdown on what to expect...

Where are you most excited about playing?
Dave Harper: "Wakefield. Apparently they have a fucking amazing pie shop and all the lasses speak like their batteries are running out, which is ideal. I've been trying to blag a gig in San Sebastian for ages based entirely on food. I hear Wakefield is very much the San Sebastian of the north(ish)."

How will you be getting into the festive spirit at Newcastle?
"Same as always, I'd imagine. Wash a handful of Mandrax down with cooking brandy and weep uncontrollably while reflecting on how my life has turned to shit."

Any plans to release new music next year?
"We never stop writing. Provided we don't disappear into our own arseholes, there will be more."

Will you be playing any of the new songs?
"To be honest, we still haven't learned the old ones yet – for two reasons. One, we are fucking stupid. And two, we are fucking stupid."

▶THE DETAILS

▶**DATES** York The Duchess (November 13), Preston 53 Degrees (14), Wakefield The Hop (16), Newcastle The Cluny (December 22)
▶**SUPPORT ACTS** TBC ▶**PRICE** £6, except York and Preston £7
▶**ON SALE** now ▶**FROM** tickets.ents24.com with 60p–£1 booking fee, except Wakefield from ticketweb.co.uk with 95p booking fee

Jake Bugg

After spending much of the year recording in super-producer Rick Rubin's Miami studio, anticipation is high for Jake Bugg's second album 'Shangri La'. The 19-year-old has announced four special dates where he'll play a bunch of tracks from the record alongside all the tunes that made his debut such a triumph last year.

▶**DATES** Newcastle City Hall (February 16, 2014), London Royal Albert Hall (21), Edinburgh Corn Exchange (22), Manchester The Ritz (23)
▶**SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
▶**PRICE** £20 except Edinburgh £17.50 and London £21
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▶**FROM** NME.COM/tickets with £2 booking fee (London £2–£4.60), except Edinburgh from ticketmaster.co.uk with £2.50 booking fee

Albert Hammond Jr

The Strokes recently announced that they're working on a new album for next year. To make the wait more bearable, guitarist Albert Hammond Jr is popping over to play some stuff from his recent 'AHJ' EP.

▶**DATES** Brighton The Haunt (December 5), Glasgow Broadcast (7), Manchester Night & Day (8), Leeds Brudenell Social Club (9), London XOYO (10)
▶**SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
▶**PRICE** £12.50 except London £15
▶**ON SALE** now
▶**FROM** NME.COM/tickets with 75p booking fee (London and Glasgow £1.50)

Cloud Control

Currently on tour with Infectious labelmates Local Natives, the quartet from the Blue Mountains near Sydney will take

RICHARD JOHNSON, JORDAN HUGHES, DANNY NORTH

second album 'Dream Cave' for another spin early in 2014.
▶**DATES** Manchester Gorilla (February 12, 2014), London Heaven (13)
▶**SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
▶**PRICE** Manchester £9 and London £11
▶**ON SALE** now
▶**FROM** ticketmaster.co.uk with £1.50–£2.25 booking fee

Coastal Cities

When High Wycombe's Coastal Cities released debut single 'Relief' last year, it caught the ears of those who like '80s-indebted indie. New track 'Summer Reign' builds on these foundations. Hear that and more as they play a handful of winter dates.
▶**DATES** Leamington Spa Zephyr Lounge (November 14), Exeter Cavern (December 5), St Albans The Horn (January 30, 2014)
▶**SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
▶**PRICE** £4
▶**ON SALE** now
▶**FROM** wegottickets.com with 40p booking fee

Lissie

The Illinois singer-songwriter and A$AP Rocky collaborator hits the road next March to perform tracks from her second album 'Back To Forever'.
▶**DATES** Birmingham The Library (March 11, 2014), Oxford O2 Academy (12), Cambridge Junction (14), Sheffield Leadmill (15), Brighton Concorde 2 (17), London O2 Shepherds Bush Empire (18)
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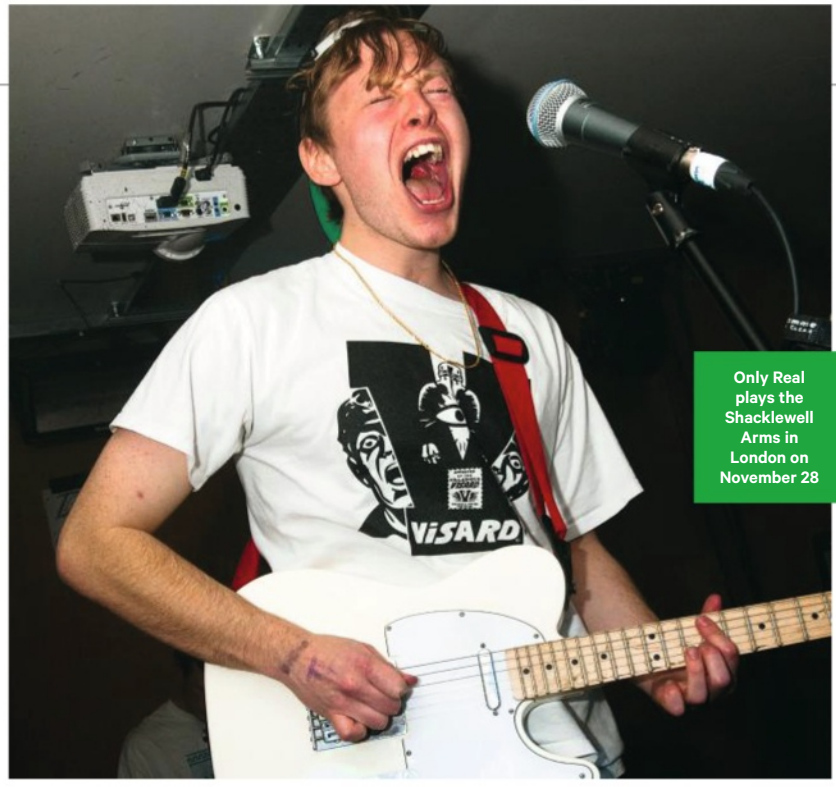


Only Real plays the Shacklewell Arms in London on November 28

▶**PRICE** £15 except London £17.50
▶**ON SALE** now
▶**FROM** NME.COM/tickets with £3.25 booking fee except London £3.50

Only Real

"I want to play every single place on Earth, then not even on Earth as well," west London rapper Niall Galvin told *NME*. His last show of 2013 is in London, not on another planet. Still, he'll play tracks from debut EP 'Days In The City', so it should be fun.
▶**DATES** London Shacklewell Arms (November 28)
▶**SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
▶**PRICE** £4
▶**ON SALE** now
▶**FROM** billetto.co.uk with 50p booking fee

Gaz Coombes

The former Supergrass frontman is back with new single 'Buffalo', and this four-date tour will take in some of the holier venues across the UK.
▶**DATES** Manchester Salford St Philips Church (November 18), Glasgow Oran Mor (19), Leeds Holy Trinity Church (20), London Union Chapel (21)
▶**SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
▶**PRICE** £15 except London £16
▶**ON SALE** now
▶**FROM** NME.COM/tickets with £1.50 booking fee (London £1.60), except Glasgow from ticketmaster.co.uk with £2.25 booking fee

Dan Croll

Former Liverpool Institute Of Performing Arts student Dan Croll was once the winner of a one-on-one chat with Sir Paul McCartney. Since then he's gone from grandiose folk singer to a guy who enjoys synths, and has arrived at a charming indie-pop sound that sits somewhere between Two Door Cinema Club and Metronomy. Check him out.
▶**DATES** Manchester Deaf Institute (26), London Dingwalls (27)
▶**SUPPORT ACTS** TBC
▶**PRICE** Manchester £7 and London £8
▶**ON SALE** now
▶**FROM** NME.com/tickets with £1 booking fee

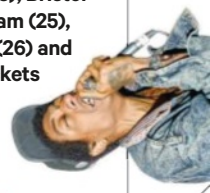
ALSO ON SALE

Edward Sharpe & The Magnetic Zeroes (February 11, 2014)

TOUR NEWS

NME Radar Tour

The support acts for the Monster NME Radar Tour have been announced. The Bohicas will join Cerebral Ballzy and The Amazing Snakeheads at Cambridge (November 15), Coventry (16), Liverpool (17), Sheffield (18), Edinburgh (19), Manchester (20) and London (21). Fat White Family will bring the weird to Brighton (22), Nottingham (23), Bristol (24), Birmingham (25), Southampton (26) and Leeds (27). Tickets from NME.COM/tickets.



FESTIVAL NEWS

Hop Farm

Following last year's cancellation, the Kent festival will take place over the weekend of July 4–6, and be "more of a boutique festival", according to UK Events.

The Warehouse Project

The series of Manchester club nights will not take place "as normal" in 2014, say organisers, although "a handful of special events" are planned. It will return in 2015 with a 10th birthday celebration.

WorldMags.net

See Deap Vally in Oxford, Brighton, Bristol, Nottingham and Manchester

GOING OUT

Everything worth leaving the house for this week

Deap Vally

On their debut album 'Sistrionix', LA duo Deap Vally set their own feminist agenda, dressed up in blues-rock riffs and singer Lindsey Troy's raw, visceral howls. As they bring back the record for one last spin in the UK before the year is out, expect Troy and drummer Julie Edwards to revitalise the likes of 'Gonna Make My Own Money' and 'End Of The World' with heaps of snarling attitude in Oxford and four other cities this week. Six dates follow next week.

▶**DATES** Oxford Academy 2 (October 30), Brighton Concorde 2 (November 1), Bristol Trinity Centre (2), Nottingham Rock City Basement (4), Manchester Club Academy (5)

▶**TICKETS** £10.50 from NME.COM/tickets with £1.05–£1.60 booking fee

Jackson Scott

The North Carolina singer-songwriter is back for a handful of dates, playing tracks such as 'Together Forever' and the irresistibly infectious 'Sandy' from his delightfully weird and lo-fi debut record 'Melbourne'.

▶**DATES** Brighton Green Door Store (November 4), Manchester Soup Kitchen (5)

▶**TICKETS** Brighton £6 with £1 booking fee; Manchester £5 with 50p booking fee, both from NME.COM/tickets

Future Of The Left

On fourth album 'How To Stop Your Brain In An Accident' Cardiff's Future Of The Left sound rejuvenated, and back to the form that made their 2007 album 'Curses' so vital. Hear their heavy rock and biting lyrics live this month.

▶**DATES** Leeds Belgrave Music Hall (November 1), Glasgow Broadcast (2), Newcastle Cluny (3), Sheffield Queens Social Club (5)

▶**TICKETS**£10 from NME.COM/tickets with £1–£1.50 booking fee

No Joy

The Montreal fuzz-pop trio celebrate the release of their latest EP 'Pastel And Pass Out' with a UK tour, opening in Liverpool. More dates follow next week.

▶**DATES** Liverpool Shipping Forecast (November 3), Manchester Night And Day (4), Glasgow Broadcast (5)

▶**TICKETS** £6. Liverpool from NME.COM/tickets with £1.25 booking fee; Manchester from ticketline.co.uk with 60p booking fee, and Glasgow from ticketweb.co.uk with £1 booking fee

Fat White Family

One of the UK's most exciting new bands take their sleazy sound out of the capital and up the motorway to Manchester. Expect nudity, bizarre haircuts and deranged behaviour from the Brixton group.

▶**DATES** Manchester Roadhouse (November 1)

▶**TICKETS** £5 from NME.COM/tickets with 50p booking fee

Frightened Rabbit

At the start of this year the Glaswegian indie rockers led by Scott Hutchison released their fourth album, 'Pedestrian Verse'. This week they begin an 11-date tour in support of that record, starting in Newcastle and continuing throughout the UK over the coming weeks.

▶**DATES** Newcastle University (November 5)

▶**TICKETS** £13.50 from NME.COM/tickets with £1.35 booking fee

MS MR

New York synthpop duo Lizzy Plapinger and Max Hershenow fly over

FIVE TO SEE FOR FREE

Thrills don't come cheaper than this

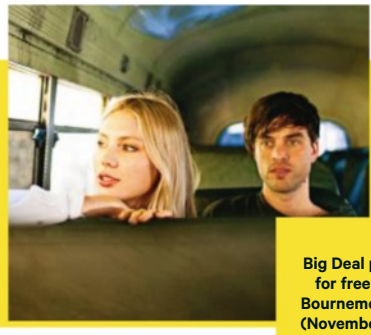
1. Girls Names
Start The Bus, Bristol
The Northern Irish post-punk band play new EP 'The Next Life'.
▶Oct 30, 9pm

2. Big Deal
Sixty Million Postcards, Bournemouth
The duo bring 'June Gloom' to the southwest.
▶Nov 2, 8.30pm

3. Empty Pools
Rise, Bristol
The local group launch their debut album 'Saturn Rerun'.
▶Nov 2, 7pm

4. Wampire
Start The Bus, Bristol
The Portland duo bring their Ariel Pink-style pop over the Atlantic.
▶Nov 4, 8pm

5. Connan Mockasin
Rough Trade East, London
The Kiwi returns with second album 'Caramel'.
▶Nov 5, 7pm



Big Deal play for free in Bournemouth (November 2)

WorldMags.net

Fat White Family play Manchester

for one massive date, where they'll treat west London to highlights from their debut albuwm 'Secondhand Rapture', released earlier this year.

▶**DATES** London O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire (November 5)

▶**TICKETS** £13.50 from NME.COM/tickets with £1.50 booking fee

Villagers

With his second album 'Awayland', Villagers' Conor J O'Brien was shortlisted for the Mercury Music Prize. The ceremony takes place two days before the band embark on their latest tour, so these dates could be a victory lap.

▶**DATES** Liverpool East Village Arts Club (November 3), Edinburgh Queens Hall (5)

▶**TICKETS** £12 from NME.COM/tickets with £1.44–£1.75 booking fee

EVENTS

Muse – Live At Rome Olympic Stadium

Shot in ultra-high definition, this film promises "an entirely new Muse concert experience". Marvel at the fancy footage from the trio's gig at Rome's Stadio Olimpico earlier this year at selected viewings this week, before it opens in cinemas across the UK on November 7.

▶**DATES** Vue Manchester, Vue London West End, Cineworld Glasgow (all November 5)

▶**TICKETS** £12.50 (except Glasgow £10.50) from film.muse.mu with 75p–£1.25 booking fee

Will Bowie win the Mercury? Find out on Channel 4 at 11.05pm, October 31

STAYING IN

The best music on TV, radio and online this week

Barclaycard Mercury Music Prize

Channel 4

This year's Mercury shortlist features some of the biggest albums of the past 12 months. Can Arctic Monkeys repeat their success of 2006? Will David Bowie emerge victorious after his magnificent comeback? The results will be announced before this is broadcast on TV, but the exclusive performances from the nominated acts make it worth a watch.

▶**WATCH** Channel 4, 11.05pm, Oct 31

The Orwells

Later Live... With Jools Holland

The Chicago teens take a break from tearing up the small venues of America to tear up Jools Holland's studio instead. Expect frontman Mario Cuomo to be on thrillingly weird form.

▶**WATCH** BBC Two, 10pm, Nov 5

Joanna Gruesome

Lauren Laverne

On debut album 'Weird Sister', Cardiff's Joanna Gruesome offer an enjoyable hybrid of riot grrrl and C86. Here they play some of its highlights in session for Lauren Laverne.

▶**LISTEN** BBC 6Music, 10am, Oct 31

King Krule

Gilles Peterson

The south Londoner pays Gilles Peterson a visit to discuss his musical influences and debut album '6 Feet Beneath The Moon'. He'll also play some of the tracks that helped form his sound.

▶**LISTEN** BBC 6Music, 3pm, Nov 2

Sympathy For The Devil

Sky Arts

The Jean-Luc Godard-directed film examines culture and protest in the '60s, interspersed with footage of The Rolling Stones recording their classic track of the same name. The link between the two never quite becomes clear...

▶**WATCH** Sky Arts, 10pm, Nov 5

Hear Noel's XFM interview on iTunes

Noel Gallagher

XFM podcast

Gordon Smart's last-ever show for the station was interrupted by Noel Gallagher popping into the studio. What followed was an hour-long interview about drunken exploits, hiding porn from his wife and giving gifts.

▶**LISTEN** iTunes.com

CATCH UP

BBC 6Music – 6 Mix

BBC iPlayer

The station celebrates a new line-up for the BBC 6Music 6Mix slot – Jamie xx, Goldie and Derrick May join Erol Alkan, Groove Armada and Andrew Weatherall – by inviting them all to go back-to-back in this two-hour special.

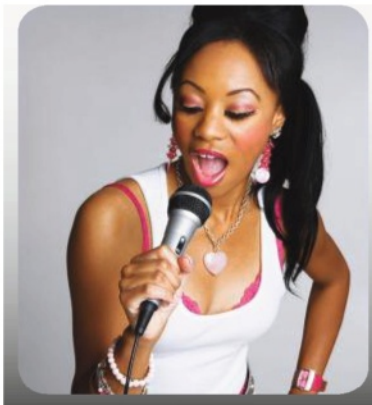
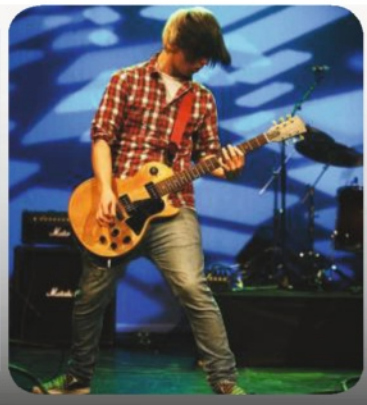
MATT RICHARDSON, JAKE LEWIS, JIMMY KING, DEAN CHALKLEY

access to music

Graded 'Good' by Ofsted
April 2013

OPEN EVENTS

Brighton . Lincoln . London . Norwich . York
Thursday 7th November 5-7pm
Birmingham . Darlington: Wednesday 6th Nov 5-7pm
Bristol: Saturday 9th Nov 11am-2pm

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THINK TANK

NME CROSSWORD

■ Compiled by TREVOR HUNGERFORD

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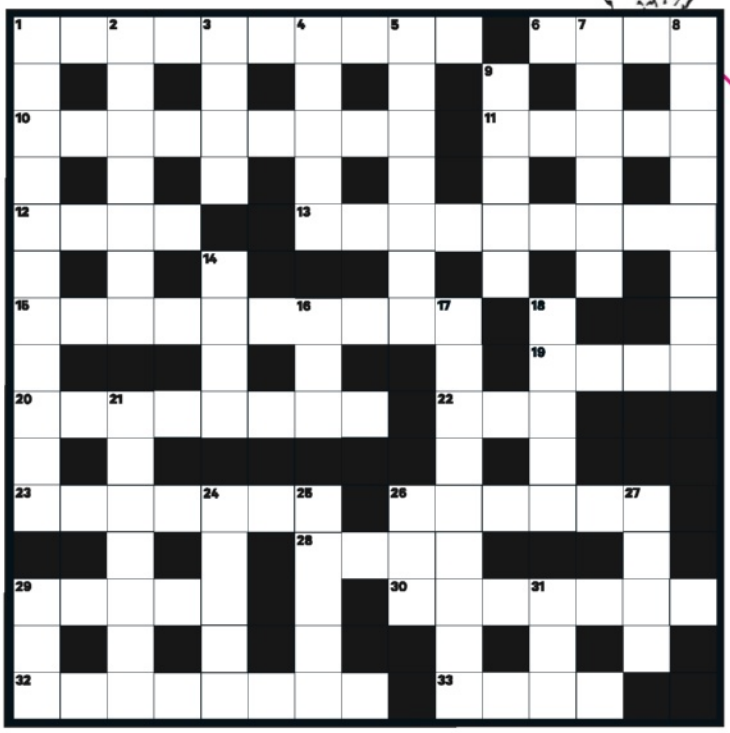

CLUES ACROSS

1+6A Just ahead of the rest? Miles in the lead actually (6-4-4)
10+33A Temples' single hasn't come to light yet (4-2-3-4)
11 *"Would you be there, be there, be there for me?"*, but namely where for Foals? (5)
12 (See 29 across)
13+30A *"Floats off down the River Nile, all aboard _____ ____ __ _____"*, Madness (5-4-2-5)
15 (See 20 across)
19 Was this single the really big break that did no good for Cat Power? (4)
20+15A Pub-rock band whose hits included 'Do Anything You Wanna Do' (5-3-3-3-4)
22 TV critic includes reference to xx number (3)
23 Band from Dublin who were fronted by Conor Deasy (7)
26 A bit of scant rapture with Adam And The Ants' music (3-3)
28 Solo album from Hugh Cornwell comes with the return flow (4)
29+12A Album that includes the track 'Maxwell's Silver Hammer' (5-4)
32 'Howlin' trio from Australia (6-2)
33 (See 10 across)

CLUES DOWN

1 *"Winding your way down on _____ _____, light in your head and dead on your feet"*, 1978 (5-6)
2+21D *"Her boyfriend's a dick, he brings a gun to school"*, 2000 (7-7)
3 (See 27 down)
4 The Wildhearts get the bronze on telly (2-3)
5+17D Even feel a DVD song is terrible by these US heavy metal rockers (7-9)
7 Had one change made in the line-up of The Clash (6)
8 (See 16 down)
9 Upfront with The Cure or Editors (5)
14 Edward Sharpe And The Magnetic Zeros are in residence (4)
16+8D Now turns hit into remix for Jay-Z (3-4-4)
17 (See 5 down)
18 *"Losing my mind on a tiny _____"*, it's a mistake to complete line from Jessie J's 'Who You Are' (5)
21 (See 2 down)
24 Eric Clapton has charted with both electric and acoustic versions of this song (5)
25 A very large group complete You Me At Six number 'The _____' (5)
26 Recent album from Van Der Graaf Generator is a bit of mental torture (1-1-1)
27+3D Baby Strange release was just absolutely wrong (4-4)
29 Albert Hammond Jr shortly to release this EP (1-1-1)
31 *"Lock up the streets and houses, because there's something in the ___"*, Thunderclap Newman (3)

SEPTEMBER 28 ANSWERS

ACROSS 1 Rewind The Film, 9+34A No Woman No Cry, 10 Do Or Die, 11+23D Awesome As Fuck, 12 Futures, 14 Talk, 16 Pooh, 17 Alice, 20 Lick It Up, 22 Pea, 24 Moist, 25 Vincent, 27 I'm Gone, 30 Muck, 32 OMC, 33 Set, 35 Dew
DOWN 1 Run Fast, 2+19A Wowee Zowee, 3 Nimrod, 4 Tunnel Of Love, 5 End Of The Century, 6 I'm Outta Time, 7 MAD, 8 Meds, 13 Escape, 15 Low, 18 Denton, 19 Zombies, 21 Up To Now, 28+26A Get Off, 29 ELO, 31 Kid

Normal NME terms and conditions apply, available at NME.COM/terms. Cut out the crossword and send it, along with your name, address and email, marking the envelope with the issue date, before Tuesday, November 12, 2013, to: Crossword, NME, 9th Floor, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU. Winners will be notified via email.

QUIZ

■ Compiled by ALAN WOODHOUSE (answers on page 67)

1 Who is the only musician to have been inducted into the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame three times?

2 Which politician guested on the 1995 Blur track 'Ernold Same'?

3 What was the first Rolling Stones song Mick Jagger and Keith Richards wrote together that went to the top of the UK singles chart?

4 Which rap star's real name is Jeffrey Atkins?

5 True or false: Ryan Adams and Bryan Adams have the same birthday.

6 Which Ramones album did Phil Spector produce?

7 Which American group had a hit with a cover of 'There She Goes' by The La's in 1999?

8 Super Furry Animals' 1996 single 'The Man Don't Give A Fuck' is based around a sample of a song by which US band?

9 With which single did Oasis last top the UK singles chart, and in which year?

10 Which comedian is the godfather of Chris Martin and Gwyneth Paltrow's daughter Apple?

11 Which DJ and former *NME* writer put out Elastica's 1993 debut single 'Stutter' on his own Deceptive label?

12 In which city did Nirvana play their final gig before Kurt's suicide in 1994?

13 What is the actual title of the 1984 Paul McCartney single often erroneously given the name 'The Frog Chorus'?

14 Which Arcade Fire track, from their eponymous 2003 EP, was re-recorded for 2007's 'Neon Bible'?

15 Which band's two members are called Charles Watson and Rebecca Taylor?

THE NME COVER THAT I GONE AND DONE

■ by CHRIS SIMPSONS ARTIST

GETTY

the Freaks

WorldMags.net

"I've always been inspired by cultural mash-ups"

at party

Inspired by their experiences at traditional Jamaican and Haitian carnivals, Arcade Fire loosened up and got physical for fourth album 'Reflektor', one of 2013's most anticipated records. So why, as they tell Laura Snapes, do they still feel like the odd ones out?

PHOTO BY ANTON CORBIJN

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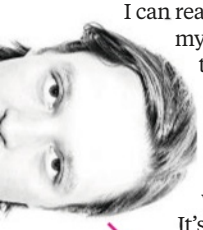
Win when he's singing: Big Day Out, Perth, 2008

If you've ever witnessed an Arcade Fire show, you'll know there's almost as much moving traffic on the fervent Canadian six-piece's stage as on an inner-city roundabout at rush hour. There's Régine Chassagne shimmying in silver, Jeremy Gara running around with a crash helmet and beating it with a drumstick, the whole stage throbbing as Win Butler marshals his brood's disparate clamour into songs that search vainly for inner peace. Stand them in a nightclub, however, and they stiffen in their Civil War skivvies, no hurdy-gurdies to occupy their empty hands. "We're not like 'Achtung Baby'-era U2 in the clubs of Berlin or New Order going to the disco," says Will Butler, laughing down the line from Spike Jonze's New York studio, where he's finishing up the band's soundtrack to Spike's new film, *Her* ("Think Arcade Fire with no drums or vocals").

"For me, the idea of going to dance in Ibiza with a bunch of rich kids who are high on ecstasy is about number one trillion on the list of things I'd want to do with my time," says Win, calling later from a restaurant around the corner from his and his wife Régine's Montreal home. "Forty-five-dollar cocktails and a privileged dance scene? It doesn't strike me as particularly joyful."

In theory, Win sees nothing objectionable about being on the beach with a group of friends, dancing and having fun. It just wasn't anything he'd ever experienced, growing up in landlocked Texas and later moving to frosty Montreal. He calls the quintessential American Spring Break experience, illuminated by glow sticks and rainbow-coloured drinks, "the opposite of where I was coming from as a teenager". Finally, he got his Damascene moment on the beach in Haiti a couple of years ago, on holiday with Régine, whose parents fled the country's tyrannical regime before she was born.

"We were at a friend's house – a vodou drummer pulls out his drum, all these teenagers hear it and come to the house from the hills, and dance until 3am by the ocean, drinking rum," he says. "I was like, OK, this I can really get into. It was the first time in my life that I was really just moved to dance, that I had that sense of physicality. That was really powerful and transformative for me. There's less of a difference between deep spiritual music and what gets people dancing there. It's really inspiring."



"We're trying to keep the roll in rock'n'roll"

After the tour for 2010's 'The Suburbs' was over, each member of Arcade Fire experienced a musical revelation that completely changed the way they approached their fourth album. They all visited Haiti for kanaval – a carnivalesque celebration of the islands' earthy, punky cultures, where locals would dress up in outfits as disparate as fire-breathing dragons, spiny fish and Coke bottles. "It's 10 times more elaborate than any rock show I've ever been to," says Win, "and it's just people with cardboard, a bit of paint and some flour making papier-mâché and pulling off this extreme, visceral show."

Richard Reed Parry fell in love with the steel drums in Jamaica, where the band snuck into the crowds parading through the streets, secretly taking field recordings as they started to think about how they might incorporate similar sounds into a new record. After the band played the New Orleans Jazz Fest in 2011 (where they duetted with Cyndi Lauper), Win, Régine and Will met a Haitian band called RAM – they hit it off and went to the studio in Lafayette for a week, where percussion scholar Régine dusted off her knowledge of Haitian rara rhythms and synth aficionado Will started seeing the potential for how Arcade Fire could combine this Caribbean music with the band's own sound: "We had them play all these traditional beats, then we thought, 'What happens if you play this with the kick drum from 'Blue Monday' or the beat from 'The Age Of Consent'?"

Throw in the influence of The Cure, Michael Jackson, Talking Heads and The Clash and what happens is 'Reflektor', Arcade Fire's unbridled fourth album. Unlike their past records, 'Reflektor' doesn't have a singular narrative concept; 'The Suburbs' began life when Win saw a photo of a childhood friend with his kid on his shoulders in their old neighbourhood, but the Haitian and Jamaican rhythms were the catalyst here. They're the soundtrack to a serious band getting physical and loosening up – though somewhat unsurprisingly, the ever-anachronistic Arcade Fire's idea of loosening up is to make a sprawling double record full of eight-minute songs. Technically they would all fit on one disc, but, Will says, they decided to break it up out of an entirely legitimate fear that it sounded "too ponderous".

"There was talk of making a short album with a really punchy core, like Talking Heads' 'Remain In Light'," he says. "We also toyed with the idea of making a 'Sandinista!' or a 'White Album' – putting in all the stupid jokes, a big, weird, sprawling thing with remixes on it, crazy children talking, getting drunk to mix it. In the end we decided, let's kind of do that, but 10 per cent tighter."

In March 2011, the band played a show at Hotel Oloffson in Port-au-Prince, the capital of Haiti. Aware – or assuming – that the audience would "never have heard The Beatles before", as Win puts it, they filled their set with covers to see what they would enjoy most. They proved unimpressed by all of it – the Creedence Clearwater Revival, Cyndi Lauper and Rolling Stones songs, the band's own material, and the fact that they had won their first Grammy a month earlier. From that point onwards, Win was determined that Arcade Fire would make a record they could play in the southern hemisphere, focusing

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intensely on rhythm – "wanting to write a bunch of stuff so the next time we went there we could kill it!"

Chances were it wouldn't go down too badly in the northern hemisphere, either; in 2007, influential *New Yorker* music critic Sasha Frere-Jones griped, "If there is a trace of soul, blues, reggae or funk in Arcade Fire, it must be philosophical; it certainly isn't audible." Arcade Fire have long been held up as the musical poster-children for the flawed concept of "first-world problems", which supposes that guilt and trifling material concerns are exclusive to developed countries – but it's valid to question whether the band's absorption of native Caribbean rhythms constitutes any kind of appropriation. RAM's Willinson Duprate and Diol Kidi will join the band when they eventually go out on the road, while Will is openly envious of The Clash's 1979 Pearl Harbour tour where Bo Diddley supported – though he says Arcade Fire could never do the same.

"People know so much more now, so you wouldn't be introducing them in the same way," he says. "I don't know what it was like with that Clash tour, but I get the sense that if we toured with some unknown Haitian folk singer you'd be throwing them to the wolves having them open for you at the O2 Arena – it wouldn't be a positive experience for them to open a giant show for us."

At the Hotel Oloffson show in 2011, Arcade Fire played a new song, 'Crucified Again', a sickly, sanctimonious tribute to the spirit of Haiti following the devastating earthquake there the year before. Thankfully, it's not on 'Reflektor'; the closest thing to it is 'Here Comes The Night Time', a completely different kind of song, unbridled and wild, with Win singing about his experiences at kanaval: "*When I hear the beat, the spirit's on me like a livewire/But it starts in your feet and it goes to your head/And if you can feel it then you'll raise the dead*".

Rather than presuming to speak for the Haitian people, he's singing about what the culture reflected back and taught him about the way different communities engage with music (coupled with a touch of Kierkegaardian theory, naturally). The sneaky field recordings from kanaval crop up throughout the album, offering tantalising windows into a luminous, raucous party, while 'Normal Person' opens with Win sounding drunk and weary as he addresses a crowd: "*Do you like rock music? Because I don't know if I do*".

"I thought it was funny, starting a radio song with that," he says, deflecting any suggestion that he hates the genre, but admitting that his experiences in Haiti made him feel like a hack for playing it. "There's a lot of visceral simplicity in rock'n'roll music, but a lot of the times the roll gets lost. We're trying to keep it in there."

To launch 'Reflektor', Arcade Fire played two secret gigs at Montreal's tiny Salsatheque club in early September, billed as The Reflektors. Hopeful crowd members were told to arrive dressed in their finest finery, with the cream of the costumed winning their place in the room. "Part of that is that the audience is the performer, something we've been trying to develop in these shows," says Win. After the band played, he DJed the afterparty – though really he was just triggering a playlist on his phone, which he mocked by hanging a specially commissioned iPhone piñata in front of the decks.

"The Fela Kuti song 'Zombie' came on, I took off my mask and was putting it on people as they took turns to hit the phone," he says. "They would scream – there was this crazy emotional release – then the phone broke and people were grabbing candy off the floor. It felt like a North American version of something I would have seen in Haiti."

So far, Arcade Fire have only played intimate, exclusive shows to promote 'Reflektor' (though they'd balk at the word 'promote'). Coupled with their taste for authenticity and intimacy, you could imagine that they might be grumpy about having to go out and play soulless halls like the O2 Arena. But the opposite is true. "It's absolutely not depressing," says Win, laughing. "These shows in Haiti are, like, 40,000 people; if people are willing to go there with you, then something magical can happen."

If anything, with two critically acclaimed records, one moderately well received one and a Grammy under their belts, Win seems frustrated that the band aren't getting what he sees as their dues, while obstinately clinging to the idea that Arcade Fire are still the underdogs. He complains that BBC Radio 1 won't play 'Reflektor' ("We were like, 'Really? We're pretty big'") while professing that the band still always feel like weirdos. They celebrate iconoclasts all over 'Reflektor' – 'We Exist' is about the idea of a gay kid talking to his dad, while 'Joan Of Arc' concerns feeling different and trying to find your place in society.

"I remember watching Nirvana play the MTV VMAs when I was a kid and thinking that they were on top of the world," he says. "But I saw it again recently, the rest of the line-up is, like, Guns N'Roses – Nirvana are the only weirdos on that whole bill, and even at the height of their power, they wanted to play 'Rape Me' and they weren't allowed to. They were still getting shit, they were still the freaks at the party. In a weird way, our band feels in a similar position to a band like The Cure before alternative music really happened. We're the weird band in this more mainstream context, a little bit the black sheep, you know?"

The idea of conformity was on his and Régine's minds following a holiday to Jamaica, where they stayed at a B&B run by a British couple who had lived in the country for over 20 years but still maintained a routine of mown lawns and full English breakfasts. "They kept complaining – 'Oh, these Jamaicans, they don't know how to make tea properly,' insisting how abnormal they were. We started talking about music and told them we played in a band. They're like, 'Oh, you guys aren't in one of those weird bands, right? You're in a normal band? You're a normal person? You guys are normal?' I thought it was so funny that they were clinging to this idea of what normal was when they'd been living somewhere else for that long, not even trying to connect."

Thirty years earlier, another colonial relic was taking hold in Jamaica; in 1979, architect and hotel baron Earl Levy began work on Trident Castle, an absurd white palace in Port Antonio originally built for the Baroness Elizabeth Siglindy Stephan von Thyssen ↣

ANTON CORBIJN, GETTY, JF LALONDE

"We've been trying to develop the idea of the audience as the performer"

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– whose name offers some clues to the décor. It boasted a ballroom, a banquet hall, stone alligators guarding the entrance, portraits of British soldiers and fake paintings of Christopher Columbus visiting the property. Earl and Baroness Elizabeth eventually fell out and he took ownership of the property – that is, until the colossal air-conditioning bill bankrupted him and it lay empty for several years.

Before the castle was converted into an exclusive hotel last year, Arcade Fire were offered the run of the dilapidated palace for two weeks so they could start tooling around with ideas for what would become 'Reflektor'. "There were these crazy statues everywhere," says Win. "Halfway through the process they started creeping me out, so I started putting pink tape over their eyes; that became part of the aesthetic of the artwork." Out of nowhere, he says how disappointed he was that the castle wasn't haunted – something the band made up for by filming "a fake horror movie" there. (You can see a trailer for "the prequel" in the band's admirably bizarre half-hour NBC special.)

Remembering everything they had experienced at kanaval, they kept the atmosphere communal and goofy. To make themselves feel like a sweaty house band, they took down white suits to play and pose in, aiming to recapture the aesthetic of the first photo Anton Corbijn ever took of them on an early tour for 'Funeral'. "It was after a show, we were still dressed in our stage clothes," says Will. "He said, 'Everyone stand over here, open your mouths like you're singing 'Wake Up'.' We were all gross – but we looked like a real band."

They recorded their Trident sessions with Markus Dravs, the producer they'd worked with on 'Neon Bible' and 'The Suburbs'. He recalls Win calling him up last April and saying it was crucial that they felt more like a reunion than work. "We went out there with a very small recording set-up that didn't allow us to be consumed by the pressures of the beginning of making a record," he says.

If anyone felt the pressure, it was the gang of producers, mixers and engineers who worked on 'Reflektor' once they took it back to studios in Montreal and New York. LCD Soundsystem's James Murphy gets top billing, but in reality the work was divided between him, Markus, Craig Silvey – who mixed 'The Suburbs' at the last minute – and Tom Elmhirst, a mixer who Win and Régine had met on holiday in Jamaica while staying with Island Records founder Chris Blackwell. Arcade Fire had the last say on everything, maintaining what Markus calls "unsettling circumstances". "I'm sure the minute I shut the door they're like, 'This was good from Dravs, this we can fucking forget about immediately, this one we might consider' – and I think it's the same with James. The bottom line is that with Arcade Fire, although you might be called a producer, they're the executive producers."

Craig calls it the "U2 methodology" – the sign of a band who have reached the point where time and money are no object. It fits Arcade Fire's renewed approach for 'Reflektor' – delegating tasks rather than trying to do everything themselves, protecting their

"Carnival is 10 times more elaborate than any rock show"

Rehearsals at Trident Castle in Jamaica

The Reflektors caught live

Arcade Fire
October 18, 2013
299 Meserole, New York

The first clue that something special is happening in Brooklyn's Bushwick neighbourhood is the man strolling out of Montrose Avenue subway station with a strip of astroturf wrapped around his head, followed by a woman with a mirrorball casually dangling from her neck. Tonight, The Reflektors are playing CMJ for the first time – though the people behind the masks first played here in 2004, when they would open their highly coveted shows with self-deprecating declarations about all the newfound hype. "Hi," Win Butler would say. "We're flavour of the month."

Tonight is Arcade Fire's first major show in support of fourth album 'Reflektor', teasingly promoted via an anonymous global campaign that was finally attributed to the band via a huge banner down the side of a Manhattan high-rise in August. The band are in disguise and they expect the crowd to dress fancy too. A line of mariachi band members, Ghostbusters, astronauts and ladies in ball gowns file down an industrial side street, a line snaking around 299 Meserole, a warehouse that holds 3,000 people.

Inside, proceedings resemble a psychedelic cocktail party: inverted mirror pyramids dangle from the ceiling and fans of the band are huddled around a small stage lined with palm trees. At 9.30pm, former LCD Soundsystem man and 'Reflektor' co-producer James Murphy strolls out and announces the arrival of The Reflektors. Three musicians wearing giant papier-mâché heads appear and start playing a dubby dirge. Cue general crowd confusion – until it suddenly becomes apparent that the real stage for tonight's performance is at the far left of the venue.

A mini stampede starts just in time for a huge black curtain to drop and reveal Arcade Fire

DAN DENNISON, STORM SAULTER, GETTY

inspirations and seeing what they can learn from others. "Having our fingers less in every pie, more having the bakers bake the pie and bring it to us, and us being like, 'This is a delicious pie!'" says Will. "We are still extremely persnickety."

That's not to say they slacked off at all; despite being enormously pregnant with her and Win's first child, Régine worked as close to her April due date as possible, taking the train back to Montreal rather than flying – most airlines won't let pregnant women travel after 36 weeks. "The only problems were the logistics of trying to get Régine up the stairs at [Tom Elmhirst's New York studio] Electric Lady," says Win, "or when the baby would kick when she was playing the drums too loud." Having heavily workshopped the songs live in Jamaica, the band were able to sneak out of the studio and play a secret show in Montreal last December to see what worked and what didn't – recording that gig, too, in order to preserve the live spirit at its heart.

Everyone they worked with on 'Reflektor' is at pains to praise how involved and precise the band were on the project. "For them, it's not finished until it's in stores," James Murphy told *NME*.

"They are staggeringly ambitious – musically, collectively, not just as songwriters but as producers too," says Tom Elmhirst, who spent 38 days straight working on 'Reflektor' downstairs at Electric Lady. (He calls the experience "bruising".) "Win is an incredibly talented producer, he's always thinking there's somewhere further you can take a song. He's bold – it's great to work with, he's on the desk, and I don't let many artists get involved like that!"

Upstairs at the same studio, The National were working on their sixth album, 'Trouble Will Find Me'. The two bands would hike between floors for bouts of ping-pong in The National's live room (at 6ft 5in, Win nearly always won) and to offer fresh perspective on new mixes. "They pulled off some amazing things," says National guitarist Aaron Dessner. "They were incorporating live recordings, really willing to shape ideas. They're that classic recording band where they're not expecting to get results immediately; they're willing to circle the vortex."

"Win's confrontational," adds Elmhirst. "He hopes everyone else cares as much as him. If not, he's going to have a problem with it."

The most revealing thing about 'Reflektor' is that most of those confrontations (which Elmhirst won't be drawn on) were contained within the studio, rather than as part of the record's release campaign. Although the roll-out took place on a huge scale, with chalk drawings (another Haitian inspiration) appearing on walls across the world, the campaign initially remained anonymous. Where the single 'Reflektor' has been interpreted as a criticism of social media, Win is sanguine about it, not preachy. "It's an interesting time, this technology that's more transformative than the automobile. I don't think we've quite come to terms with the way it's changed how we interact with each other."

His considerations were evident in the way Arcade Fire announced the release of 'Reflektor', taking to their rarely used Twitter account to reply to @fifferwright. "You're my favourite," he wrote. "Thanks," they replied. "Our new album will be out October 29." Unless you were following both parties – a slim group – you wouldn't see the message automatically. It was a gently powerful way to harness mass media to make a small gesture – though as much a paradox as criticising the privilege of Ibizan dance culture and spending a small fortune recording in Jamaica. As much as paring back by releasing an enormous album, and finding joy and frustration in perceiving themselves as underdogs while releasing one of the most anticipated albums of 2013. It's contradictory and not always cohesive, but maybe it's the most human thing Arcade Fire have ever done because of that.

"I've always been really inspired by times of incredible cultural mash-ups," says Win. "The whole point of kanaval is turning society upside down – you make fun of the politicians and the rock stars. The low becomes high and the high becomes low." In their reflective age, only Arcade Fire know which way is up. ■

Who are RAM?

Rhythmic inspiration from Haiti

▶It's as if they planned it: peering into the history of RAM, the Haitian band that inspired and helped develop Arcade Fire's new rhythmic sensibility, feels a lot like staring into a reflektor... In 1986, the tyrannical dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier – son of François, whose reign Régine's parents had fled years before – was finally exiled from Haiti. His government had kept a tight hold on vodou culture, turning it from a joyful force into an oppressive one. The music community were quick to reclaim it, and a new kind of music, mizik rasin, blossomed in Duvalier's wake – one that forged vodou rhythms and political messages with the influence of American pop, punk and blues.

The following year, the Puerto Rico-born Richard Auguste Morse signed a lease on the Hotel Oloffson in Port-au-Prince, moving to Haiti after having played in new wave bands around New York in the late '70s and early '80s. He hired a house band for the hotel, and quickly became a part of it. RAM were born. But the situation wasn't as harmonious as it sounds. Sure, Duvalier was gone, but political turmoil reigned in Haiti, with a succession of coups and corrupt governments. In 1990, Haiti gained its first democratically elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, but he was overthrown a year later. At the 1992 kanaval in Port-au-Prince, RAM played a new song called 'Fèy', meaning 'leaf'. Its lyrics had no political message, but the fact that they were of vodou origin quickly made it an unofficial anthem for Haiti and the exile of Aristide, and the beginning of a long stretch of persecution at the hands of the new government. ■

standing against a shimmering backdrop, Win Butler's eyes smeared with black greasepaint and Régine Chassagne enveloped in pink fringing. Not giving the crowd enough time to be miffed about the smoke-and-mirrors stunt, they pile into a frenetic version of the new record's title track. It's followed by 'Flashbulb Eyes', pitched somewhere between Studio One and Studio 54. "We're called The Reflektors – we're from Montreal," says Win. "You guys look beautiful, by the way." This sly bit of flattery placates the fans who waited hours to get a front-row spot and are now dancing on the decoy stage. "Sorry we played a trick on you. Will you forgive us?" he adds. "We just thought it was funny. It won't be the last time we do something we think is funny that no-one else does."

They perform just two older songs – 'Sprawl II (Mountains Beyond Mountains)' and 'Neighborhood #3 (Power Out)' – dedicating the rest of the set to eight new songs. Win leaps into the crowd during the impressive finale, 'Here Comes The Night Time', though later returns to DJ to the stragglers at the end of the evening. He thanks the crowd for letting Arcade Fire try out new material on them with a familiar-sounding caveat: "We're not quite ready for primetime."

■ LEONIE COOPER

FLAME

On the eve of a joint US tour between Tame Impala and The Flaming Lips, Leonie Cooper meets Wayne Coyne and Kevin Parker in Manhattan to put their psychedelia-fuelled bond to the acid test

PHOTOS BY GUY EPPEL

Together in eclectic dreams: Wayne Coyne (left) and Kevin Parker

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IMPALA

"I have a theory that this is the kind of tour that's been coming for a long time," says Tame Impala's Kevin Parker, a '70s-style scarf hanging from his neck. "To the point that no-one actually really organised it or had an idea – it just sort of congealed." Across from Kevin, with each nail painted a different colour, sparkly gems stuck around his eyes, blue and green streaks in his hair and flowers around his neck, it's only an Artful Dodger-style suit that stops The Flaming Lips' Wayne Coyne from being dressed like a five-year-old girl. We're on the roof of Manhattan's industrial Terminal 5 venue ahead of the bands' second show on their joint Peace And Paranoia Tour 2013 – joint being an apt word, considering how much the venue will reek of weed later – where Wayne and Kevin are holding a summit on the freakier fringes of sonic experimentation.

"I would never vomit or shit through sound," states Wayne firmly. "That sounds like a challenge," says Kevin, chuckling. Wayne reveals his fantasy to create a stage that would crush the audience as a nightmarish gig finale, which in turn leads to Kevin opening up about his desire to induce mass vomiting via extreme sub-frequency oscillations. Now we've ended up here – Shitsville: population, two. "I would love to be so overwhelmed that I would shit my pants," continues Wayne. "But I can hold my butt pretty good. I mean, I've had diarrhoea so bad and still gone up and played and not squished any out."

How the hell did we get here? Last year Kevin did a guest turn on the Lips' collaborative 'Heady Fwends' album, alongside the likes of Ke$ha, Nick Cave and Yoko Ono, but over recent months activity between the two acts has stepped up a gear. They've crafted a four-song, vinyl-only tour EP, with each band covering two of the other's songs. At 52, Wayne is old enough to be Kevin's dad, but theirs isn't a father/son-like relationship – more a meeting of marvellously mangled minds. They're peers with not just shared far-out sonics, but similar interests: namely partying down. They first met at Summer Sonic Festival in Japan in 2009...

Wayne "My legend goes that we were watching a bat that had been stuck to the ceiling of a hallway with Sonic Youth. You guys were in your dressing room and had just taken a bunch of acid and were jamming."

Kevin "I just remember you came in and started filming us."

Wayne "Yeah! It just seemed like, 'Wow! You're just done playing and now you're going to take acid and jam in your dressing room? In Japan?' We would never do that as The Flaming Lips. We don't take acid as a group."

Kevin "It was quite a special occasion for us. Japan was already blowing our minds, so I don't know why we were compelled to drop acid. Actually, Joe [Ryan, Pond founding member/ Tame Impala projectionist] had brought it with us; he'd smuggled it in a book through Singapore. We were shitting it."

Wayne "Wow! Paul McCartney went to jail for bringing pot!"

Kevin "Holy fuck, man. I was just like, 'Joe, you've got some balls, man.' I think the book was something really spiritual – it was, like, *On The Road*, Jack Kerouac or something."

Wayne "Good choice!"

Kevin "They had me by the end of their soundcheck. You know that thing you guys used to do, the PA check, where it's like, a guy speaking German?"

Wayne "That shit is so much fun."

Kevin "This fucking cacophonous noise came on the left speaker – I'd never heard anything like it. Plus, I was tripping really hard. Then a sound came out of the right speaker – totally different but equally as apocalyptic. By the end of all that it was already the greatest show I'd ever seen." ↦

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Fancy-dressed fans mob Wayne and Kevin on the roof of NYC's Terminal 5

Wayne "We always treat that as part of the show."
Kevin "It made me realise that line-check, that's when the gig actually begins. You guys should release an album that's just called 'Flaming Lips Soundchecks'. I'd buy it! The second Summer Sonic show, all the band begged the crew guys to let them be the guys in the gecko suits. I opted to stand on the side of the stage and observe, but they decided to take acid again and be on the stage. So they were all in gecko costumes, tripping again. I think some of them ended up crying. I finally got my chance at a festival in Western Australia a few months ago. I was dressed as a weird fucked-up Dorothy robot freak. Someone had acid... I was trying to speak to Steve [Drodz, Flaming Lips] after the gig and I couldn't actually get my words out."
Wayne "Damn – good times! They have some good times!"

It's unclear as to whether tonight's show involves acid, as it's just another day at the office for The Flaming Lips. Following Tame Impala's hypnotic set, Wayne strolls onto a DIY plinth, cradling and kissing a twisted baby doll. There are giant silver balls, plumes of smoke, fairy light-studded cables, confetti explosions, smoke and wind machines. The Flaming Lips also employ the use of a medical laser, which, when amped to full power, can actually burn through retinas. Their tour manager reassures me that it's only set to half-power. "It's not pointed at anyone," confirms Wayne. The show most closely resembles *The Wizard Of Oz* set among the lawless carnage of the Burning Man festival.

"Most bands that I get along with, there's an element of 'they're a lot like us'," explains Wayne after the show. "It's a bunch of dudes who don't just like music, they like having fun. They like drugs, they like experiences, they like a lot of stuff." A recent evening in Tulsa proves his point. The Flaming Lips drove up from their base in Oklahoma City to watch Tame Impala play and, unsurprisingly, things got messy.

"We all did a bunch of drugs and got totally fucking drunk," recalls Wayne. "But talking to you, you guys are like, 'Oh, it's just another night!'" Kevin smirks. "Y'know, we woke up the next morning with a few more stories than usual!" Blame The Flaming Lips' crew, who got Tame Impala doing their favourite slammer, a little something called the Stuntman. "It's a tequila shot except you snort the salt and you squirt the lime in your eye," explains Kevin. "It's extremely invigorating." Things after that, Kevin admits, are a bit of a blur.

Whatever the two bands get up to, rest assured that guitars will never be brought out for a 'Blowin' In The Wind'-style singalong. "I think when musicians end up getting together and having fun, playing music is quite an afterthought," says Kevin. "We've just played a gig and got the music out of our system. Music is something we talk about, but to actually play it? We've got other things to explore."

Wayne agrees. "I always think it's strange when anybody brings out a guitar at a party and is like 'Pay attention to me', because all you really want to do is fucking talk shit and gossip, not listen to this whiney guy play some Bob Dylan song."

UNDER THE COVERS

Behind the scenes of the Tame Impala/Flaming Lips EP, where they cover each other's songs

Wayne

"I picked 'Elephant' just because I thought there would be a lot of people that would know that song. And I like the song – I don't like it as much now that we've done it! When you go and play other people's music you're like, 'Oh, they're really doing that – I thought they were doing this!' And then we really like 'Runway, Houses, City, Clouds' [from Tame Impala's debut album 'Innerspeaker', 2010] – it has some cool lyrics."

Kevin

"We had to do ours really quickly because we were on tour at the time. We didn't have time to record the songs, so we were like, 'Let's just play them live once, get the sound guy to record the tracks and I'll mix them later on.' And that's what we did! We fucking practised in soundcheck. It was cool. One was in Dublin at our show there [at the Olympia Theatre] and one was at Rock En Seine in Paris."

"I'D LOVE TO BE SO OVERWHELMED THAT I'D SHIT MY PANTS" Wayne Coyne

As Simon Jay Catling's report from the Liverpool International Festival Of Psychedelia (opposite) shows, the cosmic genre is in an extremely healthy, stylistically varied place right now. But neither Wayne nor Kevin believes in labels nor resurgences. "I don't ever think of it as a scene," explains Wayne. "To me, if you like it, it's your scene; if you don't like it, it doesn't really exist. I just think scenes are a waste of time."

"A scene applies to something that comes up quickly and then disappears quickly but The Flaming Lips have been doing this shit for, how many years?" asks Kevin. "Fucking 30 years," says Wayne. "And they've been going strong and not wavering – to me that means they haven't been relying on any kind of scene."

Aside from the years around the release of 1999's 'The Soft Bulletin' and 2002's 'Yoshimi Battles The Pink Robots', The Flaming Lips have spent most of those 30 years existing on the

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fringes of popular culture. Even so, tonight's packed-out crowd is young, dedicated and raucous, with a significant amount of attendees arriving in fancy dress. Just as I finish talking to Kevin and Wayne, fans swarm into the rooftop space, squealing with delight upon seeing their idols, screaming dedications of undying love and running up for hugs, getting enveloped beneath Wayne's aquatic tresses. Kevin looks on, laughing. ■

TOM MARTIN

FLAME IMPALA'S FAVOURITE PSYCH ALBUMS

Wayne

Miles Davis Bitches Brew

Not just an excellent album title, this game-changing double LP from the legendary trumpeter was released in 1970. The 27-minute title track is the kind of finger-clicking fusion that goes inordinately well with psychedelic substances.

Butthole Surfers Locust Abortion Technician

Just one look at the clowns on the cover and you known 'Locust...' is going to be a disturbing listen. Mixing hardcore punk rock with whacked-out psych stylings, the Butthole Surfers' third runs the sonic gamut from sludgy to creepy.

Tame Impala Lonerism

Crowned *NME*'s Album of The Year in 2012, Tame Impala's second LP took its lead from The Beatles' own brand of psychedelia, namely 1966's 'Revolver'. Trippy but never wayward, 'Lonerism' is a focused, fabulous slice of modern psych.

Kevin

Serge Gainsbourg Histoire De Melody Nelson

An ever-so-slightly pervy concept album about a teenage girl, 'Histoire De Melody Nelson' features Jane Birkin playing the Lolita-style foil to Gainsbourg's dirty old man against a backdrop of luscious strings and hypnotic horns.

The Field Looping State Of Mind

This 2011 album is the third from Axel Willner working as The Field. The Swedish producer creates a whole new kind of psychedelia, structured around arid, looping techno. The soundtrack to many a Berlin warehouse all-nighter.

Brainticket Cottonwoodhill

Brainticket's debut album from 1971 shucked together krautrock grooves with spiralling, funk-based melody lines. The German band also owed a debt to freeform jazz, as heard in the spellbinding flute solo during 'Places Of Light'.

Meanwhile... in the psychedelic wastelands of Liverpool

While Tame Impala and The Flaming Lips held their own psychedelic summit in NYC, Simon Jay Catling stared into the third eye that is the Liverpool International Festival Of Psychedelia – and asked the bands playing what it all means...

Turn on, tune in? Oil wheel if you will...

The Liverpool International Festival Of Psychedelia. "It's a bold statement, isn't it?" says Cold Pumas' drummer and vocalist Patrick Fisher, pondering the bare beams and stained brick walls of recently renovated industrial unit-cum-arts space Camp And Furnace. The Brighton-based rhythm addicts are among over 50 artists and 4,000 people who congregate near the docks for this two-day celebration of a broad church, the second instalment following 2012's inaugural single-day event. Fisher's right: such a tagline is a thick stroke to brush over a complex genre, full of stylistic and attitudinal contradictions.

The curators' aim is to highlight the disparity between the packaged, heritage idea of psych – LSD, tie-dye, bongs and flower power – and the reality of the many micro-components that have been bracketed together in its resurgent 2013 incarnation. "I love that history psych has," co-organiser Craig Pennington says, "but this isn't revivalism. It's about challenging the existing psych community, putting together a bill that maybe shares sonic patterns but comes from different approaches."

Sure, the line-up features a talk on the history of LSD and an audio-visual exhibition that has dozens staring at tripped-out wall patterns and technicolour lights. But then there's the socially conscious, punk-flecked rage of Hookworms, the Black Sabbath riffery of Fuzz, the techno-cum-krautrock of Warm Digits and the glossily refined pop of Jacco Gardner. "It's not enough just to get onstage and jam out any more," says BBC 6Music's Marc Riley. "These new artists are filtering out the experimentations of the '70s and putting their own take on the good stuff."

Such signs of progressive intent are very welcome. Hookworms attract one of the biggest crowds of the weekend, playing an ear-splitting set in front of bold black-and-white patterned visuals that evoke no particular era. DJs include crate-diggers with forward-listening ears, like avant-electronic enthusiasts Mordant Music and Peaking Lights' Aaron Coyes. It's not your preconceived psych crowd here either: there are beards and dreads, clubbers and coiffured fashionistas.

Craig Pennington: "This isn't revivalism"

A good festival thrives on identity; in an internet age where we spread ourselves thinly over instantly accessible knowledge, the idea of the specialist expert has become refreshing again. "The organisers are right to make that 'psych' statement; they're setting up a style like a magazine," says Warm Digits' Andrew Hodson. Furthermore, there are enough common threads in even the more disparate sounds of the bill that suggest it reflects a wider movement; Warm Digits' Friday night panoramic disco might stylistically oppose Cold Pumas' scuzzy repetition in the Blade Factory's sweaty bunker the next day, but they share a desire to explore an altered physical state through music.

Growing up in Utrecht, Holland, Jacco Gardner only listened to '60s music. "I thought that's when all the good bands were from," he says. It was through signing to Trouble In Mind and discovering events like LIFP that he found contemporary acts with whom he shared common tastes. "Everyone likes to think they're doing something underground, but it was really nice to discover all these other cool bands."

However, though the artists involved seem thrilled to be here, not all are convinced of so-called psych's wider relevance. "I don't think about it at all," says Ty Segall dismissively, shortly before pivoting Fuzz through a thunderous late-night slot. "If it is happening, then cool, but I think this weekend's line-up shows it's more than just 'psych'."

As Dan Reeves from Cold Pumas points out, though, psych has never been easy to pin down. "It's not time- or place-specific, like krautrock's origins in Germany, or Detroit techno. Psych is vague." What is undeniable is that the success of this Liverpool's International Festival Of Psychedelia represents a current national interest in a form of music that's ambitious, exploratory and increasingly intelligent. ■

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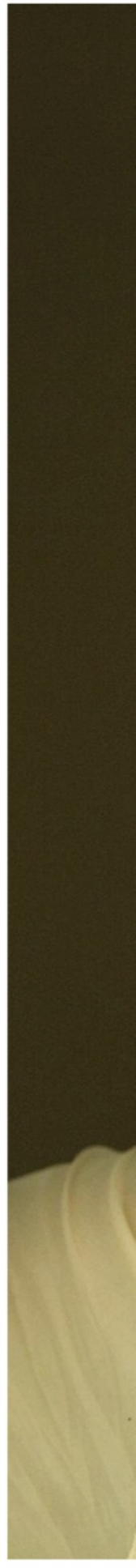
DEATH BECOMES HER

She may have left Wales for sunny LA, but psych-folk explorer Cate Le Bon's new LP digs into her ancestry. Singing about death doesn't have to be morbid, she tells Jenny Stevens



There's a restlessness in the air in London's Bloomsbury as Cate Le Bon approaches, battered guitar case in hand. As she strides through the grounds of the Foundling Museum, the 18th century home set up for the city's abandoned children and funded by the artist William Hogarth and composer George Frideric Handel, the building dazzles under a bright white sun. Signs that autumn is approaching are all around. Ochre leaves tumble from the trees in the museum's grounds as an impatient wind flutters the books in the hands of a group of children gathered outside for a school trip.

Although this year she left behind her life in Cardiff for the sunnier climes of Los Angeles, the changing of the seasons is something that will always keep Cate Le Bon tied to the UK and her Welsh homeland. "There's nothing like a perfect autumn day," she says, as we settle behind the museum's ominous oak doors to discuss her third album, 'Mug Museum'. The name came from a housemate, who nicknamed Cate's room 'the mug museum' because of her habit of stashing cups. "I loved the phrase," she says, explaining that it became a metaphor for what she was trying to do with the album. "It's this place I invented where you take your relationships, look at them and dissect them, put them on show and evaluate them."

Growing up in rural west Wales, landscape, space, isolation and the grim realities of the natural order seep through her first two albums, and 'Mug Museum' is no different. Written in the wake of the death of her maternal grandmother, it explores the effect the loss had on the women in her family and their relationships. But as dark as it sounds, it isn't a record about grief.

"It isn't morbid," she says in a soft Welsh burr that at times teeters on a whisper. "There was no great horrific sadness when she went – not because I didn't love her but because it felt like she'd done her job and was handing the baton to the next generation. It's a very specific thing, the maternal line. It's like one big relay race. I realised that there was a shift in it and that really affected me."

One of the most poignant tracks, 'Sisters', explores her relationship with her mother's sister, Auntie Rita, in which she recalls a childhood memory of singing The Beatles' 'I've Just Seen A Face' in the back of her car. "I idolised my mum's sister and I still do," she says. "When my granny died I realised that I now am her. My sister has kids and I don't have any – just like Rita. I realised that my sister's kids must love me like I did with Rita – well, I hope! It makes you look at yourself and your responsibility in relationships. You think more about your actions."

Starting her career as folk singer Cate Timothy, Cate was 23 when she met Andy Votel, Manchester musician and founder of rarities label Finders Keepers. Votel opened her ears to music far beyond her teenage taste for Pixies, Pavement and the Velvets.

"I'd been getting tired of the music I was listening to," she says. "I didn't know where to go to satisfy what I needed to hear. Andy opened this box of records and said, 'Check out this amazing music.' It blew my mind. It was so exciting that you could create music with no barriers. 'Psychedelic' is a bit of a buzzword, but to me it was just about abandoning conformity; making whatever you feel like. I got into the studio and found the nastiest fuzz guitar sound I could."

What came out of those early experiments was a riot of Pentangle-style folk strums, acid-tinged jams and blasts of garage guitar, all wrapped up in her now trademark voice, which flits from a dusty, Nico-like baritone to a coo worthy of Linda Thompson in her prime. Cate also caught the ears of Votel's friend, Super Furry Animals frontman Gruff Rhys, who hired her to play bass in his Neon Neon project in 2008. After returning from tour, she started work on her debut album, 2009's 'Me Oh My', which Rhys released on his Irony Bored label. Originally titled 'Pet Deaths', the album was partly inspired by the demise of her childhood animals.

"Death is always going to creep in once you scratch the surface of something," she says. "When I first started writing songs I didn't write about anything. I had a great life growing up in the country. I had a goat called Bluebell and my sister had one called Charlotte. We'd take them walking on the weekend – a right sight for the neighbours! I remember thinking, 'I need to write songs about actual things!' But the only things that would upset me were my animals dying. So I wrote about that." ↦

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Cate Le Bon in
Los Angeles, July 2013

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"Psychedelia is about abandoning conformity"

Following up 'Me Oh My', 2012's 'CYRK' and its sister EP 'CYRK II' saw Cate expand her sonic palette with a heavier, proggier sound. Written in the aftermath of a relationship breakdown and inspired by a visit to the remote Isle of Eigg, the lyrics explored domestic ennui and the physical and mental space she experienced when it was gone. She caught the attention of other artists, too, touring the US and UK with St Vincent. "Her songs are perfect," says Annie Clark. "Haunting, oddly familiar, and yet totally distinct."

After receiving critical accolades for her first two albums, this time she decided to swap her familiar scenery for the golden hues of California. "I'd always wanted to make this record in Los Angeles," she says. "I'd always been taken with the city since I went out there to rehearse with Neon Neon five or six years ago. Coming from Wales it was such an exciting and different place, but one you're familiar with through TV and film and the history of all the bands there, so there is a bit of pretend nostalgia about it too. And underneath the veneer there's this incredible music scene. It's really close-knit – you see musicians that you think are completely untouchable having coffee with people just starting out. I saw Slash in the cinema. How does Slash not have a cinema in his own house?! I started meeting all these great musicians and feeling I wanted to actually go somewhere and make a record instead of feeling wholly comfortable in my own surroundings."

One of the people she was introduced to was producer Noah Georgeson, a freak-folk doyen who had previously worked with Joanna Newsom and Devendra Banhart. As an artist with a tendency to meander through the recording process, working with an unfamiliar producer shook Cate into a swifter schedule – though long-term collaborators Stephen Black (aka Sweet Baboo) and her partner Huw Evans (aka H Hawkline) joined in as usual. "I wanted to make a really direct record," she says. "I think it was the purposefulness of knowing that I only had two weeks because these people are busy! It happened really quickly because we were able to make really calm but brutal decisions about what should be on the record."

On 'Mug Museum', the beautiful cacophony of instrumentation heard on 'CYRK' is pared down, instead focused around the haunting guitar. "The sounds Noah was getting from just one guitar were just wonderful," she says. "There was a real beauty in that starkness. It made you think, 'Well everything's got to fight for its place against that,' so it was easy to be brutal. When the basic sounds are so great, you don't really want to put much else on." Percussion was added by Nick Murray, drummer in Californian lo-fi garage band (and Ty Segall collaborators) White Fence.

"CATE'S SONGS ARE PERFECT. HAUNTING AND ODDLY FAMILIAR" St Vincent

"The band worked so well," she says, widening her eyes and hoisting her fists in the air excitedly. "Nick was incredible... an animal on the drums! He brought a lot of unpredictability to the record. He looks like a drawing of a kid from the '60s. He's adorable. And then he gets behind the drums and he turns into this powerhouse."

At times, 'Mug Museum' is flecked with a punk urgency, from the clanging industrial guitar chimes on 'Cuckoo Through The Walls' to the abrasive cymbal crashes on 'Wild'. But there are ballads, too – such as the devastating Bacharach-style duet 'I Wish I Knew' with Perfume Genius, whom Cate toured with last year. "Every single night I would watch him and it would never get old," she recalls. "The whole song is about the ambiguity of love, whether it's romantic or maternal or platonic. I've got a very low singing voice and he's got a very high singing voice – you're not supposed to know who's singing about who. I think what comes across in his vocal is that sense of something unresolved, this element of unquenched longing." It also contains one of the most poignant lyrical observations about love on the album: "*There's no boundary to devotion/No territory to handle and cut neatly into three*".

Cate says she has no intention of moving back home to Wales for the foreseeable future. "Since finishing the record, I've written more songs than I have done in a very long time," she says. "I think the sunshine definitely helps productivity!"

On the suggestion that moving to the States might have been a career move to eventually give her a bigger audience there, she shakes her head defiantly. "It's not about cracking America," she laughs. "I don't think I'm ever going to do that. It's just about trying to balance making music and living somewhere you enjoy. I have no great long-term ambitions. I guess if you're happy doing something, then keep doing it. And if you're not then you have to change it." ■

LA'S BON

Cate's top five West Coast records

Pavement
Brighten The Corners

"I first heard this at the tender age of 13. I was immediately smitten by Malkmus' haphazard vocal and guitar soloing and was so excited by the unpredictable sensibility of it all."

Neil Young
On The Beach

"By far my favourite Neil Young album. There's real menace ringing throughout, in both music and lyrics, but it's tempered by vulnerability. It bubbles with a defiance from start to finish."

Wendy & Bonnie
Genesis

"I first caught wind of this album when Super Furry Animals sampled their track 'By The Sea' on the song 'Hello Sunshine'. Recorded in 1969 by two teenage sisters, it's a psych-folk gem."

White Fence & Ty Segall
Hair

"San Francisco's finest join forces for this powerhouse of an album. It's steeped in the familiar sounds of '60s garage psych, but the incredible songwriting sets it apart from revivalism."

Ariel Pink
Before Today

"He's one of my all-time favourite artists. This is such a nourishing listen, combining all the elements I savour from most genres of music. Genuine and timeless. He's a genius."

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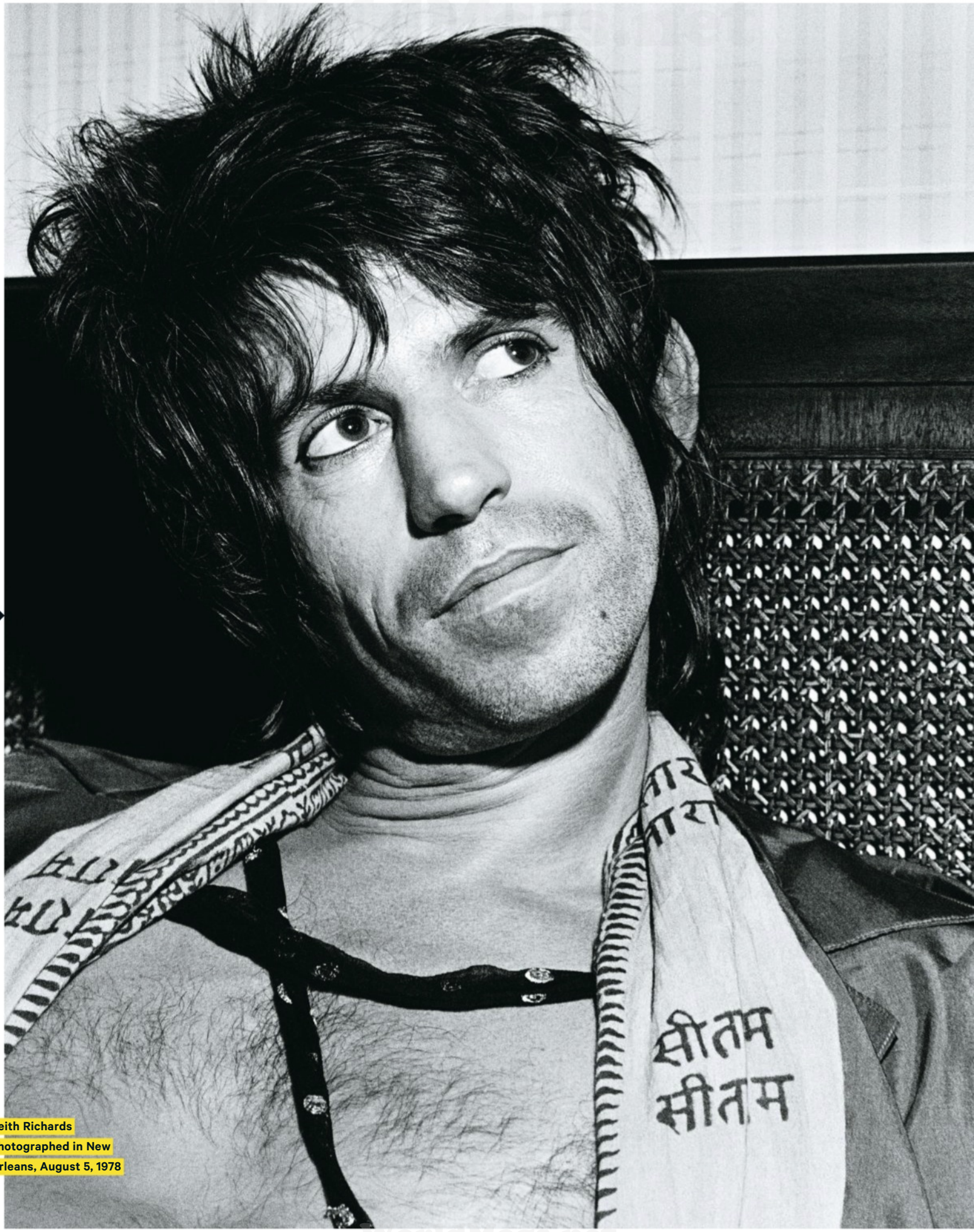

Keith Richards photographed in New Orleans, August 5, 1978

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FROM THE VAULTS

Keith in court

NME, 18 November, 1978

Thirty-five years ago, Keith Richards faced the trial of his life in Toronto after police found 22 grams of heroin in his hotel room – enough to warrant trafficking charges and a stretch in prison. NME's John May covered the story in depth...

The tangled tale began on February 24, 1977, when Keith Richards, Anita Pallenberg and their son Marlon arrived at Toronto Airport. Maybe they hadn't heard of the airport's reputation for being a 'suicide alley' for drug smugglers, with a crack narcs squad always on hand.

Anita had 28 pieces of luggage with her, and customs became suspicious. In the search a bag containing 10 grams of "high-quality hashish" was unearthed, plus a spoon with traces of heroin on it. According to a source close to the Stones, Keith "was groggy at the airport and, when their luggage was being searched, actually thought it was record company people who had come to the airport to help him. He had no idea it was the RCMP."

Pallenberg, 34, was arrested and was later to be fined $400. Meanwhile Keith and his family checked into rooms 3223-24-25 at the Harbour Castle Hotel under the name of K Redland.

Another Stones employee reported that their suite was "almost a fortress, with security guards imported from Buffalo to keep watch". Inside, he said, "their room looked terrible, because they didn't want maids snooping around. Both Keith and Anita looked awful."

It was just three days after the airport incident, at 4.30am on the Sunday morning, that the big bust came down. Rumour has it there was a tip-off from another guest in the hotel. An unspecified number of Mounties and Ontario provincial police arrived at the hotel with a warrant in Pallenberg's name, spent 45 minutes locating Richards, burst in and searched the suite. In the bathroom they found a leather pouch containing heroin, a hypodermic needle, and a teaspoon with traces of what later turned out to be cocaine. Richards and Pallenberg were arrested, their passports confiscated, and all hell broke loose.

"I just wondered if the jail uniform was with stripes or arrows" Keith Richards

Mick Jagger arrived in town on March 3 and, by all accounts, took control of the situation. The Stones were in town to complete their live American tour album and start work on a new LP. Out on bail, Richards attended the rehearsals held every night at Cinevision, a film studio in the suburb of Lakeshore. A Stones employee later told reporters: "I was amazed Keith made it to rehearsal every night because his situation with the arrests had almost ostracised him from the band. They were supportive, but they felt uneasy about the pressure."

The wheels of justice everywhere in the world grind slow, and it was almost 18 months before Richards was to return to Toronto for his court appearance. One can only speculate on the deals that went down in that period. Richards' only public interviews concentrated strongly on what was to be the main plank of his defence – his cure at a clinic in New York. The man sitting in the dock was obviously to be presented as a reformed character. With the huge financial investments at stake in The Rolling Stones' future, nothing was to be left to chance.

Cut to Toronto a week before the trial is to begin. Down at the courthouse on University Avenue, special security precautions are being arranged. Rumours are circulating the city that Richards will not show, a story quickly squashed by the Stones publicist Paul Wasserman. "That's silly," he pointed out. "If he didn't turn up for the trial, he could be extradited from almost anywhere, with the exception of somewhere like the Yemen. ↦

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Keith scrubs up neat for the judge (left); the scene in court (below right)

And they don't have 24-track recording studios."

Sure enough, Richards arrived very much the family man, with his mother and two kids, Marlon and Dandelion, in tow. There was no trace of the man who had a string of drug and other convictions stretching back 10 years, the hedonist who had once owned a yacht called Mandrax. With money no object, the Stones had hired the best Canadian lawyer they could find: Austin Cooper, a 49-year-old criminal lawyer with 25 years' legal experience. The case was to be heard by Judge Lloyd Graburn, a 52-year-old with a college haircut and two sons. Unaware of who exactly Richards was, he had to ask around before realising the true celebrity credentials of the defendant.

In just two years, the court was told, Richards had spent $650,000 on heroin

As is common in most legal cases, plea bargaining was the order of the day. With the judge's approval, the more serious charge of trafficking heroin was dropped, as was the cocaine possession charge, leaving Richards to face a simple heroin possession rap. This still meant, though, that he was looking at the chance of going down. The defence tactics soon became clear. Cooper explained to the court that Richards had bought the heroin in bulk to reduce the chances of detection. His New York score amounted to 22 grams of 34 per cent pure smack, which when diluted was enough for 440 injections, with Richards shooting them up at the rate of 10 a day.

Cooper's oratory was overwhelming. Richards was described to the court as a man with "poor self-image... a tragic person who became addicted to heroin to prop up his sad personal life". His name was ranked alongside such other tormented artists as van Gogh, Judy Garland, F Scott Fitzgerald and Billie Holiday. The Cooper version of Richards' habit began in 1967. "It was after a very gruelling schedule with the group, and he was exhausted after all the playing and touring. He experimented with drugs. In 1969 he started with heroin, and it got to the state where he was taking such quantities and getting no euphoria from it. He was taking such powerful amounts – as much as two and a half grams a day – just to feel normal."

The first cure came in 1972, "but he fell back into the cauldron". Another cure attempt at a Swiss clinic the following year worked for a while, Cooper claimed, "but again he fell off the wagon, so to speak". In 1974 he failed again, but since May 1977 Richards had been undergoing treatment at the Stevens Psychiatric Centre in New York, and this time he was winning the struggle.

Health factors aside, Richards' habit took a heavy financial toll. In just two years, the court was told, Richards spent $650,000 on heroin. "He should not be dealt with as a special person," Cooper pleaded. "But I ask your honour to understand him as a tortured creative person – as a major contributor to an art form. I ask you to understand the whole man."

The defence rested, and the prosecutor asked the judge for a jail sentence on the grounds of the amount of heroin snatched, Richards' previous record and his age. The judge decided to retire and deliver sentence the following day. The verdict was a shock to nearly everyone. The judge said jail was out because Richards was taking the cure: "His efforts to remove himself from the drug subculture can only have a salutary effect on those who admire him." Secondly, because Richards had money – in 1977 he earned some $300,000 – he was unlikely to resort to crime to support his habit.

So Richards was put on a year's probation, ordered to continue his cure and to play a concert for the blind. Richards gave a clenched fist salute to the packed courtroom before leaving with his bodyguard. Another trial, another day.

The court scene over, Richards arrived an hour late for a press conference, his last public appearance before waving Canada goodbye. Wearing jeans, a leather jacket and a T-shirt with the legend 'Robbie Rocker' on it, he fielded a barrage of enquiries. How had the whole incident affected him? "Oh, it's all showbusiness. Every day of my life is showbusiness. I didn't give it much thought until the last few days. I mean, it wasn't as if I was waking up each day thinking the trial is coming." Had he made any jail contingency plans? "I just wondered if the uniform was with stripes or arrows."

On the subject of heroin, he said he gave up his addiction because it was boring and commented: "You lose your respect and confidence. Once you get to the stage of addiction, it is just where you get to ask, 'Where is the dope?' You wonder what you're doing sitting in an apartment with four men who are dribbling... I'm happy to be off it... I have become a lush." When asked about the Stones' reaction to the verdict, he said: "They were very ticked off I didn't get put away for 30 years. I'm going to use the bail money to bribe the rest of the band to do the benefit." Of the judge's comment that some Stones' songs glorified drug use, he said: "I think that is a misconception. There are drug overtones in about one per cent of the band's material and Mick wrote them, not me." ■

What happened next

How the Stones bounced back from Keith's indictment

THE CNIB GIG

The Stones played the show in aid of the Canadian National Institute For The Blind in their 200-capacity auditorium, despite switchboards being jammed with people desperate for tickets and the nearby 16,000-seater Maple Leaf Gardens offering to host the event.

THE CLEAN-UP

Sure enough, Richards' short, sharp shock in the Canadian courts did inspire him to kick heroin, but it also destroyed his relationship with Pallenberg, who struggled to clean up at the same time. The pair soon split.

THE CAREER RESURGENCE

With Richards back on fighting form, the Stones recorded their most celebrated late-'70s album 'Some Girls' in 1978. Including Keith's legendary 'Beast Of Burden', it set them up for decades more at the top of the rock'n'roll tree.

CHALKIE DAVIES, ERIN COMBS, ILLUSTRATION: LAURIE MCGAW

THIS WEEK IN 1988

Nothing compares 2 U2

The class of '88 take cover as Sinéad O'Connor opens fire on Bono, Michael Jackson and the entire music industry

In the wake of a surprise Top 20 hit with 'Mandinka', Sinéad O'Connor reveals herself as a controversy magnet, laying into Michael Jackson ("I like [his] music but it fucking disgusts me to see him and people like Whitney Houston make themselves white so that MTV will play their videos"), Pete Waterman ("I would like him to be in the Hippodrome when I firebomb it"), the "disgusting... racist" music industry, the British government and their Northern Ireland "death squads" and anyone else that crosses her mind, while striking a butter-wouldn't-melt pose on the cover. She even turns the flurry of abuse on herself, as she claims she has "real horrible legs and a big nose" and doubts she'll have another hit, particularly since she's currently working with banned performance artist Karen Finley on a piece about "Freudian analysis and the whole idea of womb envy".

Her biggest beef is with U2, who she says are essentially a mafia running the Irish music scene. In response, Bono pipes up saying, "You don't actually believe Sinéad, do you? Sinéad is not in the business of communicating facts, she's in the business of creating news for herself. She's in the tradition of press manipulators that started with punk, with Johnny Rotten."

OUT OF THIS WORLD

NME unmasks the 100 bands that are actually aliens, with Tracy Chapman exposed as Joan Armatrading's "bodysnatcher", UB40 coming from "a planet populated by men in Fred Perry suits who look like pigs whilst singing awful reggae covers with vegetarian fanatics" and the shocking news that Erasure are actually "giant killer gas clouds from the far outposts of an ever-expanding universe". And Billy Idol? "Show us your tentacles, foul despoiler of a million peaceful worlds!"

JUNIOR DINOSAURS

NME's Sarah Champion visits the young J Mascis of Dinosaur Jr in his cramped bedroom – a vision of cable-TV slackerdom and "mugs of mould" – at his parents' Amherst, Massachusetts home. Ambitions? "None." The future? "No plans." Music? "We just make records so we can get out of the house and tour sometimes." Their new single 'Freak Scene' and album 'Bug' suggest a hidden vibrancy and bassist Lou Barlow does have a job in an old people's home, but otherwise, Mascis mumbles, "we're getting lazier".

REVIEWED THIS WEEK

The Fall – 'I Am Kurious Oranj' 8/10

"I still don't have to like Mark; he's unloveable, lacking emotional warmth, arrogant and looks like a cantankerous Mancunian welder. But let's hear it for aesthetic anaesthetics and repetitive white crap. The bastard's gone and done it again. ■ LEN BROWN

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

▶ The BBC deny that they've banned acid house anthem 'We Call It Acieed' by D-Mob, after it was the only rising single that hadn't been playlisted

▶ Public Enemy embark on a European tour. "We're going down like Sammy Davis Junior at Nuremburg," they say

▶ Sonic Youth play London's Astoria following the release of their LP 'Daydream Nation'. Reviewer Edwin Pouncey calls it "the best rock show of my life"

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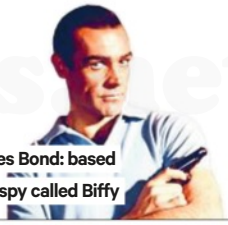
KEVIN CUMMINS

DOES ROCK 'N' ROLL KILL BRAINCELLS? Vs THE FANS

WE FIND THE ROCK STAR, YOU ASK THE QUESTIONS

Simon Neil

Biffy Clyro guitarist and frontman



James Bond: based on a spy called Biffy

1 What colour is the flag that's flying on the back cover of 'Only Revolutions'?
Gloria Ford, Newcastle, via email
"Green. We did a bunch with different options of blue and green and red and green. Blue and red [on the front] looked the most revolutionary, almost like the French flag. We should be enormous in France."
CORRECT

2 What colour shirt were you wearing at Radio 1's Big Weekend this year?
Don 'The Biff', Edinburgh, on Twitter
"No shirt. Don't try to trick me like that."
CORRECT

3 Which of your songs is used in two episodes of *The Inbetweeners*?
Darren Dalgeish, Glasgow, on Twitter
"I believe that is 'A Whole Child Ago'. I'm a huge *Inbetweeners* fan, but it must be in the first season 'cos I've never actually seen the episodes. My friends always text me. It's a friendly, indie, dancey song, so I'm not surprised that's the one they used."
CORRECT

4 During which song did your guitar go up in flames at this year's Reading Festival?
Colin Bond, Southampton, on Twitter
"'Mountains'."
WRONG. 'The Captain'
"Shit, you're fucking right. I set fire to it at the end of 'The Captain'."

5 Who was playing on the NME/Radio 1 Stage at the same time as you at in T In The Park 2010?
Harry Green, Colchester, on Facebook
"I'm going to guess... We Are Scientists?"
WRONG. The Cribs
"I love The Cribs. Sorry, Ryan, Ross and Gary!"

6 What did you lose in the lake while filming the video to 'God & Satan'?
Savi Chakraborti, London, via email
"My wedding ring. We shot the underwater bit at 6am and my fingers were so cold and so numb. I got in touch with the farmer, who then scuba dived for six hours in this horrible filthy lake and managed to find it with this metal detector. I'll be forever thankful to that farmer."
CORRECT

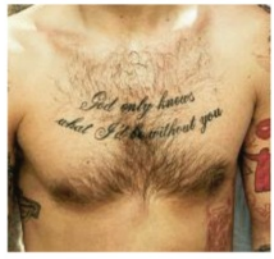
7 What was the name of the band that Screwfish supported when you played your very first gig?
Jess Lawrence, Exeter, via email
"Pink Cross. I remember we were so fucking excited about that gig. We actually had to skip school at lunchtime to go and soundcheck to play that gig. That was the day that rock'n'roll entered my veins."
CORRECT

8 What guitar are you playing in the video to 'Folding Stars'?
Steve Faust, Manchester, via email

Simon with his Gretsch guitar in the 'Folding Stars' video

"I'm playing a Gretsch White Falcon."
CORRECT

9 You have *"God only knows what I'd be without you"* from The Beach Boys' 'God Only Knows' tattooed on your chest (below). What lyrics come next?
Charlotte Price, Liverpool, via email
"*If you should ever leave me/Life would still go on, believe me*".
CORRECT



10 Name three people you have claimed Biffy Clyro is named after.
Ronnie Hart, London, via email
"We've claimed to be named after a 19th-century Ayr United footballer, a Scottish astronaut and a British spy called Biffy who James Bond was based on."
CORRECT. Are they all true?
"Of course they are."

SCORE = 8
"Hideously average."

WORDS: RICH PELLEY PHOTOS: REX, RICHARD JOHNSON, ED MILES, TOM OXLEY

SHAMIL TANNA

ALSO IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE

INTERVIEWS

- MGMT
- Connan Mockasin
- Bombay Bicycle Club
- Gary Numan
- Jagwar Ma

ALBUM REVIEWS

- Cate Le Bon
- Courtney Barnett
- Cults
- Giggs
- Wooden Shjips

CAUGHT LIVE

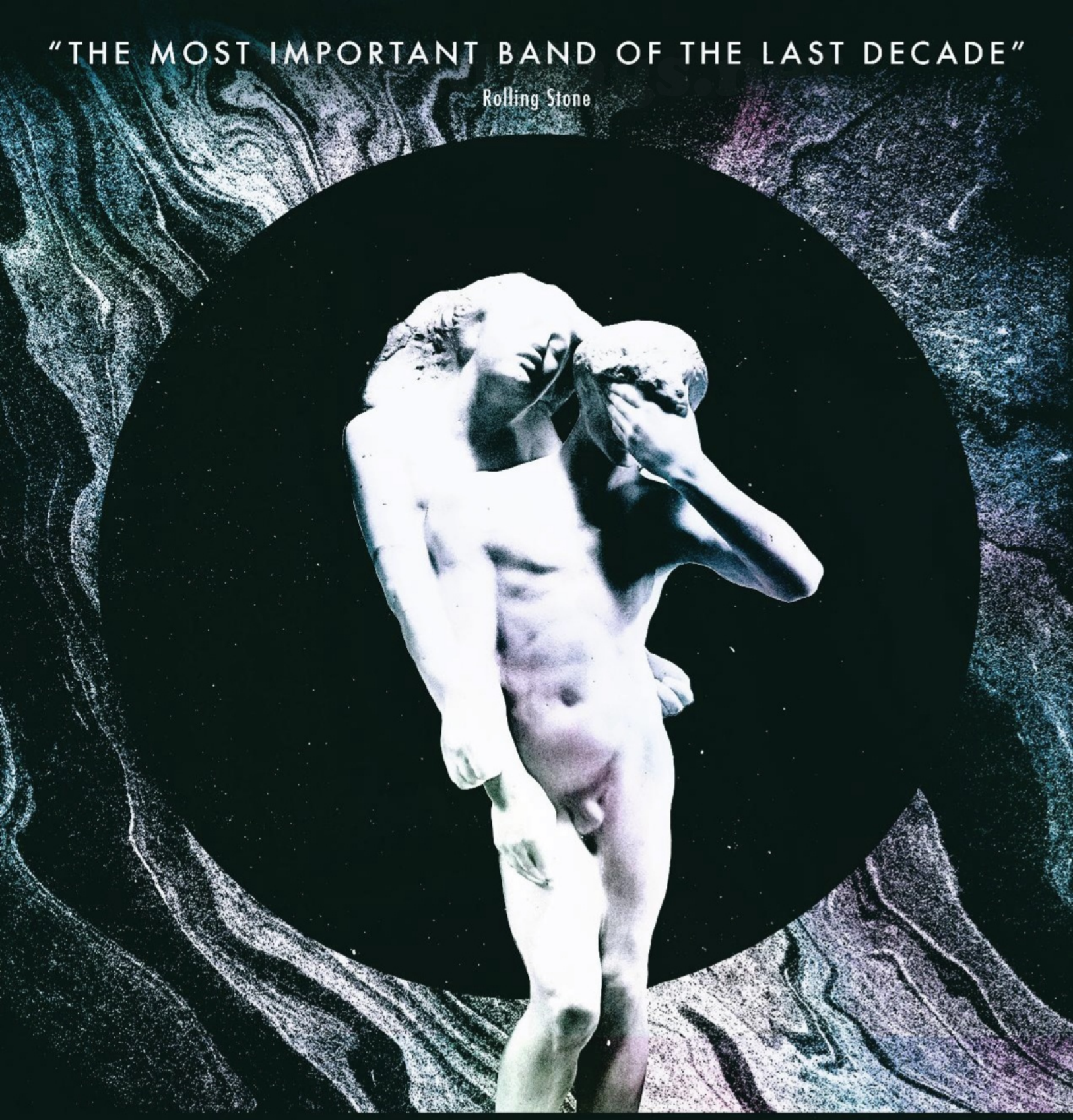
- Circa Waves
- Mac DeMarco
- Warpaint
- Franz Ferdinand
- Nick Cave
- Kanye West

Dave Sitek's first Radar column!

Quiz answers 1. Eric Clapton (solo, and as part of both Cream and The Yardbirds) **2.** Ken Livingstone **3.** 'The Last Time' **4.** Ja Rule **5.** 'True (they were both born on November 5) **6.** 'End Of The Century' **7.** Sixpence None The Richer **8.** Steely Dan **9.** 'The Importance Of Being Idle', 2005 **10.** Simon Pegg **11.** Steve Lamacq **12.** Munich **13.** 'We All Stand Together' (the song is actually credited to Paul McCartney & The Frog Chorus, hence the confusion) **14.** 'No Cars Go' **15.** Slow Club

"THE MOST IMPORTANT BAND OF THE LAST DECADE"

Rolling Stone



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